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ABSTRACT

The first of the 5 reports provides general statistical information describing a defined population of older foster youths, ages 16-21, who receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Personal characteristics, family situation, court involvement, out-of-home care history, education and employment records are presented. Reports 2 and 3 furnish more personal insight into the strengths and weaknesses, aspirations, experiences and relationships of 51 of the youths, as well as describing the circumstances and current experiences of 47 participating foster parents. The 4th report focuses on the social workers and their relationships with, and roles vis-a-vis, the youths, their families and their foster parents. The special report (#5) presents inconclusive data on the 3 youths, all girls, who live in group, as contrasted with foster, homes. Pertinent survey and interview forms, as well as questionnaires, are included. (TL)

ED053393

A SOCIAL SURVEY OF OLDER YOUTH IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE: AN ANALYSIS OF 237 CASE RECORDS

Project 410: Study Report #1

San Diego County
Department of Public Welfare

July, 1969

CG 006 378

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July 9, 1969

TO: AVIS RANA, CHIEF
SPECIAL PROGRAMS, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

FROM: DAVID C. PRITCHARD, PROJECT SUPERVISOR
PROJECT #410

The first report of a series of research studies under Project #410 is hereby transmitted. This report is entitled, A Social Survey of Older Youth in Out-of-Home Care: An Analysis of 237 Case Records. It provides general statistical information describing a defined population of dependent older youths, i.e., foster youths in San Diego County, ages 16-21, receiving AFDC and living in out of home care.

The research design for this study was reviewed by the Project #410 Advisory Committee in December, 1968. Subsequently a pilot study of 50 cases was conducted in January. Refinements to the interview schedule were completed in February. The case records were read and schedules completed by staff personnel, Judith Marquette and Phyllis Boyles, during March, April and May, 1969. Department research analyst, Ollie James, provided consultation and technical assistance. The collected data was analyzed and the report prepared by J. McEwan Macintyre, special consultant for research. Professor Norris E. Class, School of Social Work, USC, Project Consultant, participated in the planning and development of the study. Secretarial support was provided by Pearlie Foster and Jewel Daniels.

Cooperation of all district offices for making case records readily available was appreciated.

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INTRODUCTION

This is the first report of a study regarding the special characteristics and needs of certain older adolescents receiving out-of-home care in San Diego County.

Between March and May 1969 the case records of each of the 237 adolescents between the ages of 16 and 20 receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and in out-of-home care were read and information taken from them to enable a description to be made of these young persons. This report is based on information that has been recorded by the caseworkers and probation officers that supervise these young people in their out-of-home placements. The County Probation Office accepts responsibility for supervising those youth who have been before the court; the Welfare Department has responsibility for the others who need out-of-home care.

The Public Social Services Manual of Policies and Procedures of the California State Department of Social Welfare outlines the age requirements for those eligible to receive AFDC as follows:

> A child is eligible on the basis of age from verified pregnancy until the 21st birthday and is unmarried.
>
> A child 16 or 17 years of age must be:
>
> - regularly attending school or training program, or
> - physically or mentally disabled, or
> - employed and contributing to the family or conserving his income for further education or preparation for future employment in accordance with a plan approved by the county welfare department.
>
> A child 18, 19 or 20 years of age must be regularly attending school or a training program.*

The results of the inquiry into the characteristics of the youth in this study will be presented to describe: (1) characteristics of the youth; (2) the youth's own family situation; (3) the youth and the courts; (4) out-of-home care; (5) education; (6) employment and income;

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* PSS Manual 41-101.4, 41-101.41, 41-101.42

(7) recreation and organized group activity. In each of these areas, statistics will be given for the total group of youth in the study (237). Further analysis, however, will be presented only with regard to the 86 adolescents who are under the supervision of the San Diego County Department of Public Welfare. The 151 youth who are supervised by the County Probation Office are not analyzed to the same extent in this report.

I. Characteristics of the Youth Studied

A. Sex

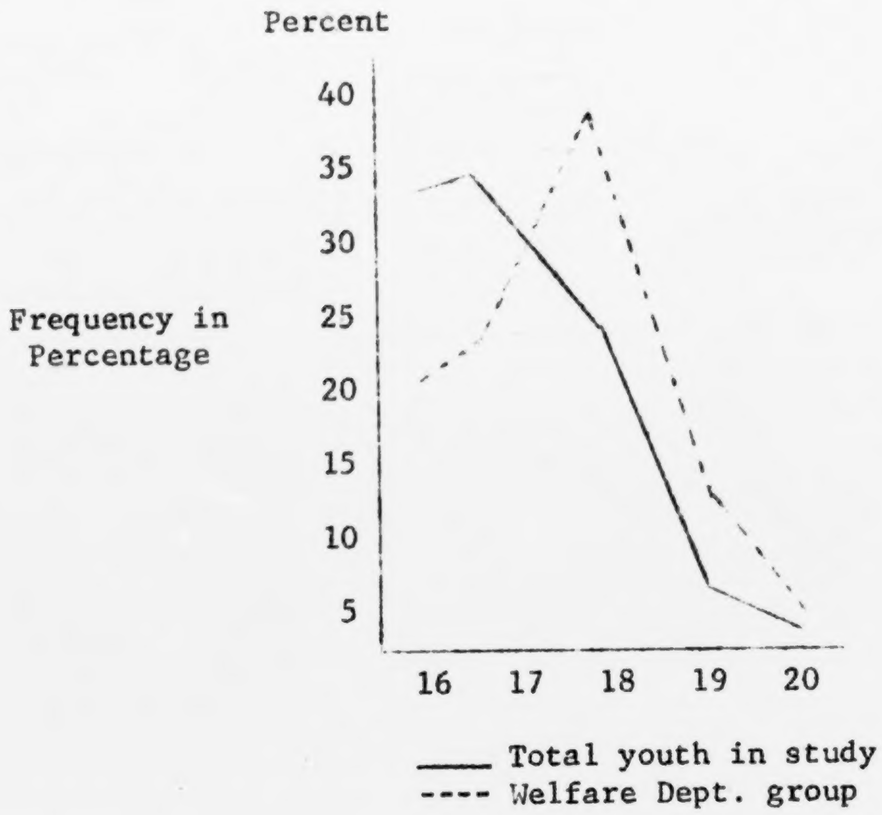
More girls and young women receive out-of-home care than boys and young men. 127 (54 percent) of the total group are female; 110 (46 percent), male. Although the difference is maintained, the percentage of females to males increases in the welfare group. In that group, 55 (64 percent) of the youth are female, while 21 (36 percent) are male. The figures for the welfare group are, then, tempered by the fact that more males are under the supervision of the County Probation Office than females.

B. Age

The median age of the older adolescent in out-of-home care is 17 years. The median age of the Department of Welfare group, however, is older--18 years. Thirty-six (44 percent) of the Welfare Department group are 16 or 17 years of age; 50 (58 percent) of the them are between 18 and 20 years old. The following graph shows the percentage of youth in each age group:

Age of Youth	Total	Welfare Group
16	33%	20%
17	34%	23%
18	24%	39%
19	7%	13%
20	2%	5%

The data in the table on the previous page may be shown graphically:



The most striking feature of the graph, of course, is the increase in the number of youth in out-of home care under supervision of the Welfare Department at age 18. This is due in large part to the fact that the County Probation Office has no continuing responsibility for youth after they reach their 18th birthday. When these youth continue to need out-of-home care, the responsibility for their supervision moves to the County Department of Public Welfare.

C. Ethnic Background

Well over one-half of the youth studied were of Caucasian ethnic background, 140 (59 percent). The next largest was the Mexican-American, 40 (17 percent). Only 25, (11 percent) were Negro. Approximately the same percentages were found in the Welfare Department group: Caucasian (55%), Mexican-American (19%), Negro (10%). A further 12% of the youth had racially mixed parentage; 2% were American Indian.

Accurate statistics for the entire County with regard to the ethnic background of its citizens could not be obtained. A recent (1968) report conducted in the City of San Diego school district does give some indication of ethnic patterning, at least among those who were enrolled in some educational program of the school district.

Ethnic Background	City of San Diego*	Total AFDC population in County**	Total Youth in Study	Youth in Welfare Group
White	77%	51%	59%	55%
Negro	11%	23%	11%	10%
Spanish surname	10%	23%	17%	19%
Mixed parentage	?	?	10%	12%

These figures indicate that more youth of Caucasian background are represented than might be expected, that fewer youth with Spanish surnames are in out-of-home care than might be predicted, and that the percentage of Negro youth is much lower than the percentage of the total AFDC population in the County.

D. Religion

The religious identification or affiliation of the youth in the study is predominantly Roman Catholic or Protestant. The two religious groups were almost equal numerically as far as religion was reported. Sixty-five (27 percent) of the total group were being identified with the Roman Catholic Church, 61 (26 percent) were identified with Protestant denominations. However, the majority of young persons were not seen as being actively engaged in any ongoing way with church activities of any type. Only 38 (16 percent) were reported as attending church services or other church-related meetings or activities. Twenty-two of the 38 youth were in the Welfare Department group. Of this 22 youth who are known as taking part in church activities, the great majority attend church services; others attend youth or young adult groups at their churches; some attend parochial schools. About one-half of those who go to church are also involved in other church activities.

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* These statistics were reported in the San Diego Union, March 8, 1969, page B-3, in an article entitled "School Census Shows Rise in Minorities".

** These figures are taken from AFDC Caseload Characteristics-December, 1967, by Sidney W. Herzik, a memorandum giving some local findings from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare nation-wide study conducted of AFDC caseloads in December 1967, page 4.

Care has to be taken with the figures relating to religion and attendance at church-related activities as information was not reported in almost 30 percent of the records that were studied.

E. Marital Status

Two hundred and twenty-nine (96 percent) of the total group have neither married nor borne children. As might be expected in such a group of young people aged between 16 and 21, a few members of the group have been married or borne children. In the Welfare Department group, two of the young people have been married but had no children; two have had children without marriage.

F. Health

The youths in this study are reported to be substantially free from physical disease or handicapping conditions in the majority of cases. Of the total number, 45 (19 percent), do suffer from such conditions, 13 (15 percent) of the welfare group are reported as having chronic conditions.

Identified emotional and psychiatric problems are reported in 92 (39 percent) of the youth studied. However, the welfare group has only 23 (27 percent) of its youth having such problems. Within the group of 23 youth in the welfare group reported as having emotional and psychiatric problems are eight youth who have been assessed as being mentally retarded. This group is evenly divided with four boys and four girls. Three of the youth are 16, three 17, and two are 18 years old. Five of these youth are placed in the Home of Guiding Hands, Lakeside (four girls and one boy); the other 3 boys are in foster boarding home placements. Six of this group are reported as being severely retarded with IQ's below 50. The other two, although functioning at the retarded level, do have more potential ability.

Fifteen of the youth in the welfare group are reported as having emotional and psychiatric problems other than mental retardation. Two of these young people have been diagnosed as schizophrenic, others are reported as receiving psychiatric attention with their feelings about themselves--feelings of inadequacy, for example, that impair their ability to perform as well as they are able. As with the retarded group, some of the youth with other emotional problems manage in boarding homes, others are placed in facilities where they can receive more intensive psychiatric care.

II. Youths' Own Family Situation

One hundred and seventy-one (72 percent) of the youth in the total group studied are regarded as the legitimate children of their own parents. In the welfare group, the number is slightly lower--57 (67 percent).

An earlier study has indicated that the average AFDC case, or family, contains only one adult recipient.* in the most circumstances it is the mother who holds the family together both by her presence in the home and by her actions.

A. Mother

Seventy-eight percent of the mothers of the total group of youth studied are alive; 80 percent of the mothers of youth in the Welfare Department group are alive. Twenty-two percent of the mothers of all the youth studied are deceased, a higher percentage than for fathers (14 percent).

The whereabouts of 152 (88 percent) of the living mothers of the total group and 52 (85 percent) of the welfare group is known. Thirty-eight (44 percent) of youth in the welfare group have mothers who maintain contact with their adolescents. As with the fathers, the most common method of contact is the visit, although telephone contact is also used to a greater extent by the mother. Only 27 (31 percent) of the total number of mothers do not maintain contact with their adolescents; when this number is added to the number of mothers who are deceased, we see that over one-half of the young people in care do not have the opportunity for maintaining contact with their own mothers. Only a few of the youths' mothers contribute to their support in their foster homes.

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* Sidney W. Herzik, AFDC Caseload Characteristics-December 1967, page 3.

In looking at the problems of mothers of the youth studied that decreased their ability to carry the parent role adequately, we see that handicapping conditions were the most frequently cited in 93 (39 percent) of the mothers in the total group and 27 (32 percent) of the mothers in the welfare group.* Delinquency and desertion are cited in 88 (46 percent) of the total group and 32 (37 percent) of the welfare group. Alcoholism is stated as being a serious problem in 43 (18 percent) of the total group and 13 (15 percent) of the mothers of youth in the welfare group. Many mothers have to cope with more than one of these problems.

B. Father

Two hundred and two (86 percent) of the fathers of the youth in the study are alive. The whereabouts of 47 (63 percent) of the living fathers in the welfare group is known. Less than a third of the fathers are known to maintain contact with their children, however. Visits between father and youth are the most common methods of contact; letters and telephone calls are used minimally. Twenty-seven percent of the living fathers in the Welfare Department group do contribute to the support of their offspring while these youths are under the supervision of the Department.

In looking at the problems that fathers of the youth had that impaired their ability to carry the parent role adequately, desertion was the most frequently cited characteristic, 91 (38 percent). Delinquency and alcoholism are listed in 94 (44 percent) of the cases. Although physical or mental handicaps are listed in 43 (19 percent) of the total cases, only 8 (9 percent) of the fathers of youth in the Welfare Department group fall within this category. Chronic unemployment was seen as a contributing factor to the parents' inability to function effectively as a father in 33 (14 percent) of the total group and 10 (12 percent) of the welfare group. As might be expected, 38 of the 86 natural fathers of the welfare group had more than one of these characteristics. The father with a physical handicap, for example, may also have drunk excessively and then deserted his family.

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* Included in the category of "handicapping conditions" are physical handicaps, mental and emotional handicaps (at times leading to institutional care being necessary) and mental retardation.

C. Siblings

Two hundred and twenty-four (94 percent) of the youth studied have brothers or sisters.. One-half of the youth in the welfare group have three siblings or less, 42 (47 percent) have four siblings or more.

Forty (47 percent) of the welfare group youth have two or more siblings older than they are; 26 (30 percent) have no brothers or sisters older than themselves.

Forty-one (48 percent) of youth in the welfare group have three or fewer younger siblings; 20 (23 percent) have none younger. There is greater likelihood of youth maintaining contact with younger siblings, 40 (46 percent), than with older ones, 34 (39 percent).

D. Reasons for Initial Out-of-Home Placement

In looking at the reasons stated in the case records for youth needing out-of-home placement, 172 (72 percent) of the total group were unable to continue to stay in their own homes due to parental inability or parental unavailability.* In looking more closely at these two categories in relation to youth in the welfare group, 44 (51 percent) of the parents were unable to fill their parental role adequately. This was due to their own illness or handicap, 15 (17 percent); neglect of the child, 13 (15 percent); inadequacy, 5 (6 percent); other reasons contributing to parental inability, 11 (13 percent).

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* In most cases these reasons relate to the one remaining parent in the home; it is when this parent can no longer manage that out-of-home care is requested.

In the category of parental unavailability to carry out the parent role, 10 (12 percent) of the youth had no such parent available and a further 15 (18 percent) had no parent available due to desertion or death.*

Only 56 (24 percent) of the youth in the total group and 16 (18 percent) of those in the welfare group first moved to an out-of-home placement because of their own behavior. Eight (9 percent) of the welfare group youth were seen as being beyond control of their own parents, 7 (8 percent) requested out-of-home care themselves and only one moved out of his own home because of delinquency.

Original Reason for Placement	Total Group	Welfare Group
Parental inability	112 (47%)	44 (51%)
Parental unavailability	60 (25%)	25 (30%)
Youth's behavior	56 (24%)	16 (18%)
Unknown, not reported	9 (4%)	1 (1%)

E. Public Assistance

A high percentage of families were receiving some form of Public Assistance prior to the youth's requiring out-of-home care. Almost sixty percent of all families of the youth in the study were receiving financial assistance of some type. Aid to Families with Dependent Children was the most frequent type of assistance received; 56 percent of both the total group and the welfare group fell within this category. General Relief was received by 73 (31 percent) of the total group and 24 (28 percent) of the welfare group. Seventy-five (32 percent) of all the families received assistance from more than one program; 23 (27 percent) of the welfare group did, also.

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* The unavailability of the remaining parent in the home is the result most usually of his or her being incarcerated in a correctional institution, hospital or mental health facility.

The families that were receiving assistance had been doing so for quite some time. Forty-eight (20 percent) of the total group and of the welfare group had received financial assistance two years or less. A further 24 percent of the total group and of the welfare group had received such assistance for between two and seven years.

Twenty-one (24 percent) of the families from which the youth has been removed are currently receiving Public Assistance of some type.

III. The Youth and the Courts

Although 78 (33 percent) of the total group of youth are currently designated as "dependent children of the court" and 74 (31 percent) are designated as being "delinquent", none of the youth in the welfare group are so designated.

One hundred and thirty-seven (58 percent) of all the youth have at one time been adjudged as being a "dependent child of the court", but only 34 (40 percent) of the welfare group have ever had such adjudication. The reasons most often given for court appearance are with regard to parental neglect (19% of the youth) or because there is no parent available (18 percent of the cases). In the welfare group 12 (14 percent) appeared in court to deal with parental neglect and 16 (19 percent) as there was no parent available.

Eighty-three (35 percent) of the total group have at one time been adjudged to be "delinquent" by the court; however, only 9 (10 percent) of the welfare group have ever been so adjudged.

These statistics with regard to frequency of court appearance reflect the fact that the County Probation Office supervises young persons under the age of 18 who have appeared in court, and for whom it is felt that there is need for out-of-home care. Financially, however, AFDC funds are administered by the Welfare Department. It is not unusual for youth who have in the past been adjudged "delinquent" or "dependent" to be currently under the supervision of the Welfare Department if the need for out-of-home care continues after a court order has been rescinded.

Fourteen (6 percent) of the youth currently have legal guardians named for them by the court. In most cases such guardianship is placed in the hands of relatives, friends or foster parents.

IV. Out-of-Home Care

A. Total amount of Out-of-Home Care Received

Over one-half of all the youth in the study have received out-of-home care for less than four years, 127 (54 percent). Eighty (34 percent) of them have received such care for more than six years.

The Welfare Department figures show that 22 (25 percent) of their youth have received out-of-home care for less than two years; 23 (27 percent) have received this care for two to three years. This percentage drops, however, for those who have received supervised care away from their own homes for between four and five years (13 percent).

B. Number of Placements

The median number of placements that each of the youth has had is two. Over one-third, 31 (36 percent) of the welfare group have been in only one placement. Adding this to the 18 (21 percent) of the youth that have been in two placements, it is seen that 49 (57 percent) of the welfare group of youth have had either one or two placements. However, 11 of the youth in the welfare group have been in four or more placements.

C. Age at Onset of Out-of-Home Care

The majority of the youth in the study first received out-of-home care before reaching their 16th birthday, 187 (79 percent). Only 50 (21 percent) first received this care after they turned 16.

Fifty-nine (69 percent) of the youth in the welfare group first lived away from their own home before reaching the age of 16; 27 (31 percent) were sixteen or older. Although 30 (35 percent) of the youth began their out-of-home care between the ages of ten and fifteen, a further 26 (30 percent) have lived in a type of supervised living arrangement since before they were nine years of age. Thirteen (15 percent) of this latter group left their own homes when they were three years of age or less.

D. Types of Placement While Receiving Out-of-Home Care

Over 70 percent of the total number of youth and almost ninety percent of the youth in the welfare group are presently in boarding homes. Seventy-seven (32 percent) of the total group and 31 (36 percent) of the welfare group continue to live in the home in which they were first placed. However, 27 (31 percent) have been in three or more homes since first leaving their own homes. Thirty-two (13 percent) of the total group and 7 (8 percent) of the welfare group have never been placed in boarding homes; these youth have received their out-of-home care in correctional, psychiatric or mental retardation institutions so that they might receive more specialized care according to their specific needs.

The largest percentage of youth in boarding homes have been in their present home for less than one year; 111 (47 percent) of the total group and 37 (43 percent) of the total group fall within this category. Eighty-eight (37 percent) of the total group and 30 (34 percent) of the welfare group have remained in their present boarding home for between one and three years. Forty-three (17 percent) of the total group and 19 (21 percent) of the welfare group have received care for four years or more in their present boarding home.

While 156 (66 percent) of the total group have had short-term institutional placements, only 33 (39 percent) of the welfare group youth have. The majority of the youth who have received such a placement were either in Juvenile Hall or the Hillcrest Receiving Home.

Eighty-eight (37 percent) of the total group and 15 (18 percent) of the welfare group have had long-term institutional placements. These have been in either correctional or psychiatric facilities.

Fifty-two (22 percent) of the total group and 9 (10 percent) of the welfare group have had both long and short-term placements; for example, placement in Juvenile Hall awaiting adjudication, and then placement in the Home of Guiding Hands following appearance in court.

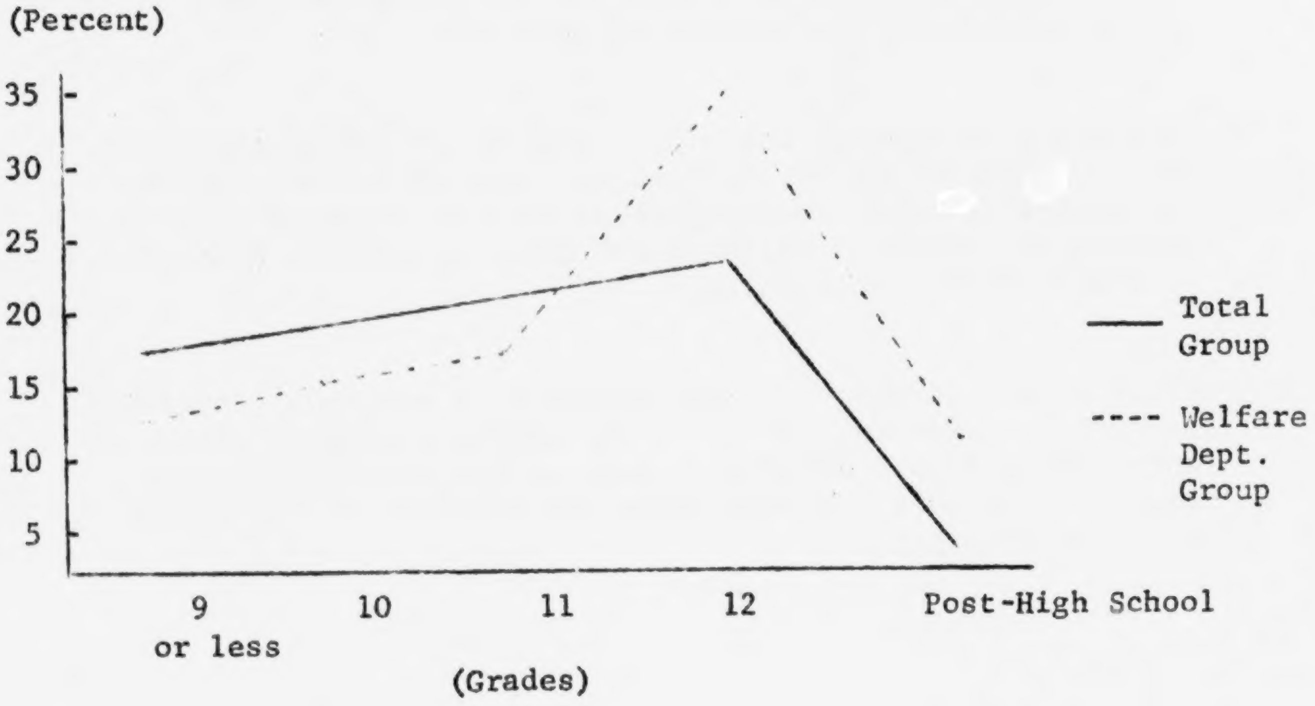
E. Home-finding

Most of the boarding homes that are utilized were found by social workers from the County Department of Public Welfare or probation officers. However, 24 (28 percent) of the homes utilized by the welfare group were found by the youth themselves.

V. Education

Almost all the youth studied are at present attending school or college; only 7 (3 percent) of the total group and 2 (2 percent) of the welfare group were not.

About 20 percent of the total youth fell in each of the following categories: 9th grade or lower, Grade 10, Grade 11. Although 57 (24 percent) of the youth were in Grade 12 during the 1968-69 academic year, this number included 31 (36 percent) of the youth in the welfare group. Only 4 percent of all the youth were involved in post-high school education, but all 11 of these young persons were under the supervision of the Welfare Department. At age 18, students in grade 12 or taking higher education, who had previously been supervised by the County Probation Office and who need continuing supervision become the responsibility of the Welfare Department. As a result of this, although the total number of older adolescents decreases, the proportion of them in the Welfare Department caseloads increases.



School Grade	Total #	Total %	Welfare #	Welfare %
9th Grade or lower	43	18	12	14
Grade 10	47	20	14	16
Grade 11	42	22	15	17
Grade 12	57	24	31	36
Post High School	11	4	11	12

Students who had received AFDC and who were in out-of-home care while they attended school or a training program, but who do not continue on to college or take part in a continuing training program are no longer eligible for financial assistance through the AFDC program. For this reason, the number of young persons in the study drops off after Grade 12 has been completed.

More and more young persons do continue their education past high school; certainly a larger proportion than seems to be represented in this study.

In looking at the case records, it seemed that the educational training that the majority of the youth were receiving could lead to higher education. One hundred and twenty-eight (54 percent) of the total group and 50 (58 percent) of the welfare group appeared to be taking courses, and attaining sufficiently high marks in them, to allow them to continue their education after high school. Earlier figures, however, show that there are 31 youth in Grade 12 in the welfare group, but only 11 are taking courses at the College or University level.

In looking further at the high school education of the youth, we find that 56 (24 percent) of them are in special classes. The number is quite evenly divided between those in special classes for retarded children and those in classes designed to remedy academic deficiencies.

A few of the young people are enrolled in vocational training programs, either during the winter months or summer months or only during school holidays. Most of the youth who are so engaged take this training under the auspices of the Neighborhood Youth Corps.

VI. Employment and Income

The majority of youth in the study are not employed either on a full or part-time basis. Only 40 (17 percent) of the total group and 20 (23 percent) of the welfare group are presently employed. Of this number, only 3 of the 237 youth work on a full-time basis; none of these are in the welfare group.

The work that the youth are employed to do is most often in the nature of unskilled labor. A few of the girls have been employed on a part-time basis as waitresses or to do clerical work.

One-third of the youth receive income in addition to the grant received under the AFDC program. Their own employment is the most usual source of this income; others receive Social Security benefits. Forty of the total group and 16 (18 percent) of the welfare group receive such benefits. Twenty-three (27 percent) of the fathers, and four (5 percent) of the mothers contribute to the support of their adolescents in the welfare group.

In looking at the amount of other income reported as being received by the youth, one-half of the number who do receive other income receive less than $40 per month in addition to their grant, while the other half (11 percent of the total group) receive more than $40. In the welfare group, 7 (7 percent) of the group receive $40 per month or less, 15 (17 percent) receive more than that amount.

VII. Recreation and Organized Group Activity

One-third of the total number of youth and 34 (40 percent) of the welfare group are involved in recreation or other organized group activity in the community. Sports teams account for most interest and activity within the welfare group; church groups are regularly attended by 9 (10 percent) of the group.

Twenty-five (28 percent) of the youth in the welfare group have received training or are involved in educational programs outside of school with regard to sports and either music or dancing.

VIII. Summary

The characteristics of the 237 youth receiving out-of-home care under the auspices of the AFDC program have been analyzed and reported. More females receive this type of care than do males between the ages of sixteen and twenty. The median age of the youth in the group is 17 years. Ethnicity is predominantly Caucasian. The following table summarizes the findings with regard to age, sex, and ethnic background:

	Male				Female				
Age	Cauc.	Mex-Am.	Negro	Other	Cauc.	Mex-Am.	Negro	Other	Total
16	30	9	5	8	23	5	4	2	86
17	15	8	2	7	36	7	5	6	86
18	13	1	2	3	13	4	6	5	47
19	5	2	0	0	3	3	1	1	15
20	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Total	63	20	9	18	78	19	16	14	237

Other characteristics of this youth population as determined by the study and presented in this report indicate that slightly over one-half are identified with the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches; each denomination is almost equal to the other in size. The youth are substantially free from physical health problems, but almost one-half the youth are known to have emotional or psychiatric problems; some youth are retarded.

The youth who receive out-of-home care come from families with many problems. In many instances out-of-home care was felt to be essential when the one remaining parent in the home, usually the mother, was no longer able to care adequately for the child. In only one-quarter of the total group was the child or youth moved to out-of-home care because of his or her own behavior. Desertion, alcoholism and delinquency were the reasons most often given for fathers of the youth being unable to fulfill their parental role. Physical and emotional handicapping conditions, death, and delinquent acts were the reasons most frequently given for the mothers of the youth not being able to discharge their parental responsibilities. More than one-half of the families of the youth were receiving financial assistance of some type from the Department of Public Welfare before the youth moved into out-of-home care. Almost one-quarter of the families which the youth have left are currently receiving Public Assistance under one or more programs.

More than one-half of the youth in the study have received out-of-home care for less than four years. The average number of foster home placements that each youth has had is two. The majority of youth first received out-of-home care before reaching their sixteenth birthday. Most of the youth live in boarding homes although 32 of them have lived only in correctional, psychiatric or mental retardation institutions since leaving their own homes.

With few exceptions, all the youths are attending school or college. Less than half the youth are employed in either full or part-time capacity.

Of the 237 youth in the total group, it has been pointed out that 86 are under the direct supervision of the Department of Public Welfare. The following table summarizes the characteristics of the welfare group with regard to age, sex, and ethnicity:

	Male				Female				
Age	Cauc.	Mex-Am.	Negro	Other	Cauc.	Mex-Am.	Negro	Other	Total
16	4	1	1	3	6	3	0	0	18
17	2	4	1	2	11	3	1	1	25
18	5	0	1	2	10	2	4	5	29
19	3	2	0	0	3	1	1	1	11
20	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Total	14	7	3	7	33	9	6	7	86

The pattern of those under the care of the Department of Public Welfare tended to follow that of the total group. There were some areas, however, where there were differences noted between the two groups.

In the department group, the ratio of females to males is greater. There is a higher percentage of females to males in every age group with an overall difference of 30 percent more females in the group than males. The median age is higher by one year (18) than in the total group.

Although there is no difference in the religious identification or affiliation between the groups, more youth in the welfare group take an active part in church activities.

A smaller percentage of the youth in the welfare group are known to have emotional problems than in the total group, however, there is a sizeable number of youth needing specialized treatment in the welfare group.

The total group of youth has a higher percentage of its members who have had long- or short-term institutional placements or are currently living in institutions.

It is in the area of court appearances that the greatest differences are found between the total group of youth and those in the welfare group. The total group has a higher incidence of court appearances and current adjudication by the court than the welfare group except in the matter of legal guardianship. In this last situation, a higher percentage of the youth in the welfare group have had legal guardians appointed by the court than in the total group.

Certain characteristics of the youths that are the responsibility of the Welfare Department have special relevance for future planning by the Department:

1. Eighteen is the median age for the group of youth supervised by the Welfare Department. A substantial segment of this group are 18, 19 and 20 years old. At present the majority of these older youth are living in traditional foster home settings. The question arises as to whether this group of youths, as compared to other youths in the community in the same age bracket, really need family type supervision. Consideration should be given to alternatives to foster homes for older youth who must live out of their own or relatives' homes. Examples of alternatives would include: apartments (either alone or shared), rooming houses, residence halls, dormitories, YMCA, YWCA, etc.

2. The AFDC program requires that for youth living out of their own home assistance payments are made through an intermediary who is usually a foster parent. Other than one narrowly defined exception, the AFDC youth cannot be his own payee. This limitation frequently restricts the kinds of living arrangements and other opportunities that can be planned by older out of home youth eligible for AFDC. Their socially dependent status is continued through age 18, 19 and 20 since they must be linked to a foster home in order to receive the necessary financial support.

The necessary flexibility in respect to individual case situations could be achieved by making it possible for the older foster youth to be his own payee when his circumstances indicate he is ready for emancipation.

3. The predominance of girls may have significance for the sex of the social workers recruited to deal with these clients.

4. In almost every case the youth is continuing his academic education while in out-of-home care. Social workers, then, need skill in educational and vocational counseling and assisting with appropriate initial job placements.

5. The fact that a substantial number of youth become the direct responsibility of the Welfare Department rather than the County Probation Office when they pass their 18th birthday necessitates adequate cooperation and planning between the two departments to assure continuity.

6. Almost one-third of the youth are reported as having emotional or psychiatric problems. This fact may affect the level of training needed by the social workers and may suggest the need for sufficient psychiatric consultation for those workers.

7. Although use of narcotics is not reported as being an important element in the parents of the youth in care, alcoholism is reported quite frequently.

8. Few children and youth need out-of-home care primarily as the result of their own actions. The main reason is the inability of their parents to fulfill their parental roles. More effective ways have to be established to assist these parents to cope if the incidence of children and youth in care is to be lowered.

APPENDIX

Dist. # ______________

PROJECT #410 SURVEY SCHEDULE

Name of Youth ____________________ Address ____________________
Case Name ____________________ Case No. ____________________
Name of Payee ____________________ Address ____________________

1. Birthdate of youth. Month ________, Year ________, Age ________, Verified ________.

2. What is youth's sex? (1) Male; (2) Female.

3. What is youth's ethnic group? (1) Caucasian; (2) Negro; (3) Mex-American; (4) Amer-Indian; (5) Mixed parentage; (0) Other (specify) __________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

4. Type of placement. (1) Boarding Home; (2) Institution; (3) Boarding School; (4) College; (5) Independent Living Arrangement; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

5. What is youth's religious identification or affiliation? (1) Catholic; (2) Protestant; (3) Jewish; (0) Other (specify) ______________; (9) None; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

6. Does youth _actively_ participate in any church activity? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

6a. If _yes_ to item 6, indicate type of activity as specifically as possible. If _no_ to item 6, circle (0). (1) Catholic School; (2) Youth Group; (3) Sunday School; (4) Church Services; (5) Other (specify) __________; (7) Multiple; (0) None; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

7. Is youth regarded as illegitimate? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

8. Is youth's father living? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

8a. Is whereabouts of father known? (1) Yes; (2) No; (0) Deceased; (X) NR.

8b. Is youth currently in a communicative relationship with his father? (1) Yes; (2) No; (0) Father deceased; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

8c. If _yes_, by what means? (1) Visits; (2) Correspondence; (3) Telephone; (7) Multiple; (9) No contact; (0) Father deceased; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

8d. Is father contributing to youth's support? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.; Specify $ ______________; (0) Father deceased.

9. Is youth's mother living? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

9a. Is whereabouts of mother known? (1) Yes; (2) No; (0) Deceased; (X) NR.

Col. _21_ thru here

☐ 9b. Is youth currently in a communicative relationship with his mother? (1) Yes; (2) No; (0) Mother deceased; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 9c. If yes, by what means? (1) Visits; (2) Correspondence; (3) Telephone; (7) Multiple; (9) No contact; (0) Mother deceased; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 9d. Is mother contributing to youth's support? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.; Specify $ _______________; (0) Mother deceased.

☐ 10. Does youth have siblings? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10a. What is total number of siblings? (0), (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9) 9 or more; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10b. How many older? (0), (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) 8 or more; (9) No siblings; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10c. Is youth currently in a communicative relationship with older siblings? (1) Yes; (2) No; (9) No siblings; (0) No older siblings; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10d. If yes, by what means? (1) Visits; (2) Correspondence; (3) Telephone; (4) Live together; (7) Multiple; (8) No contact; (9) No siblings; (0) No older siblings; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10e. How many are younger? (0), (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) 8 or more; (9) No siblings; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10f. Is youth currently in a communicative relationship with younger siblings? (1) Yes; (2) No; (9) No siblings; (0) No younger siblings; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 10g. If yes, by what means? (1) Visits; (2) Correspondence; (3) Telephone; (4) Live together; (7) Multiple; (8) No contact; (9) No siblings; (0) No younger siblings; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 11. Has youth ever been adjudged a "dependent child of the court?" (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 11a. If yes, indicate whether: (1) Currently; (2) Previously; (0) Never been adjudged; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 11b. If yes, what was reason? (1) Parental neglect; (2) Parental abuse; (3) No parent available; (4) Parent unable to provide adequate care; (7) Multiple; (9) Other (specify) ___________________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 12. Has youth ever been adjudged a "delinquent" by court? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

Col. 36 thru here

☐ 12a. If yes, indicate whether: (1) Currently; (2) Previously; (0) Never been adjudged; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 12b. If judged "delinquent," what was the charge? (1) Out of parent's control; (2) Malicious mischief; (3) Truancy; (4) Ran away from home; (5) Theft; (6) Drug abuse; (7) Multiple; (8) Sexual Deviancy; (9) Other (specify) ______________________; (0) Never been adjudged; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 13. Has youth ever had a legal guardian? (1) No; (2) Yes (currently); (3) Yes (previously); (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 13a. What is the relationship of the guardian to the youth? Relative (specify) ____________; (9) Non-relative (specify) ______________; (0) Never had legal guardian; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 14. Youth's marital status: (1) Never married; (2) Married, no children; (3) Married with child; (4) Unmarried with child; (5) Unmarried, relinquished child; (0) Other (specify) _________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 15. What was youth's age at time of initial out of home placement? Specify __________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 15a. What was reported as the specific reason for youth's initial out of home placement? (1) Parental neglect; (2) Parental abuse; (3) Parental inadequacy; (4) Parental illness or handicap; (5) Parents deserted; (6) Parent or parents deceased; (7) Youth beyond parental control; (8) Youth's delinquency; (9) Youth request; (0) Other (specify) ______________________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 16. Has youth's family received Public Assistance prior to his placement? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 16a. If yes, what type of assistance? (1) AFDC; (2) OAS; (3) ATD; (4) GR; (7) Multiple; (9) Other; (0) Did not receive Public Assistance; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 16b. If yes, how long did family receive Public Assistance prior to youth's placement? Specify _______________; (9) Did not receive Public Assistance; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 16c. Is family currently receiving Public Assistance? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17. What is total amount of out of home care youth has had? Specify ____________________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17a. What is total amount of out of home care youth has had while receiving AFDC? Specify _____________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

Col. 49 thru here

☐ 17b. How long has youth been in current placement? Specify __________; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17c. If current placement is a boarding home, how was it found? (1) DPW; (2) CPO; (3) Youth himself; (4) Relative; (5) Friend; (specify) __________; (0) Not in boarding home; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17d. List types of out of home care youth has received: (1) Boarding Home; (2) Institution; (3) Other (specify) ________; (7) Multiple; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17e. How many short term institutional placements has youth had? (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (0); (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17f. List short term institutions: (1) Juvenile Hall; (2) Hillcrest; (3) Psychiatric care; (7) Multiple; (9) Other (specify) ________; (0) None; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17g. How many long term institutional placements has youth had? (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (0); (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17h. List long term institutions: (1) Correctional; (2) Psychiatric; (3) Mental Retardation facility; (7) Multiple; (8) Both long and short term institutional care; (9) Other (specify) _____________; (0) None; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 17i. How many different boarding home placements has youth had? (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (0); (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 18. Is youth going to school or college? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 18a. If yes, grade? (1) Below 9th; (2) Below 9th: Retarded; [illegible], 9th; (4) 10th; (5) 11th; (6) 12th; (7) 13th; (8) 14th; (0) Not in school; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 18b. Is youth's present educational training such that it could lead to higher education? (1) Yes; (2) No; (3) In college; (0) Not in school; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 18c. Is youth in special classes? (1) Yes; (2) No; (0) Not in school; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 18d. If yes, type? (1) Vocational; (2) Gifted Program; (3) Retarded; (7) Multiple; (8) Other (specify) __________________; (9) Not in special classes; (0) Not in school; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 19. Is youth in formal vocational training program apart from school or college? (1) Yes; (2) No; (3) Yes, summer only; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

Col. 63 thru here

☐ 19a. If yes, under what auspices? Specify ______________________; (0) Not in training program; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 20. Is youth presently employed? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 20a. If yes, full time or part time? (1) Full time; (2) Part time; (0) Not employed; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 20b. If employed, nature of job? (1) Unskilled labor; (2) Clerical; (3) Waitress; (4) Sales; (9) Other (specify) ______________; (0) Not employed; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 21. Does youth have any income in addition to grant? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 21a. If yes, source? (1) Employment; (2) Foster Parents; (3) Social Security; (4) Other (specify) ______________; (0) Has no income; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 21b. If yes, amount? Specify $ ______; (0) Has no income; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 22. Regarding recreation, is youth linked to an organized community group activity? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 22a. If yes, nature? (1) YM(W)CA; (2) Scouting; (3) Boys Club; (4) Church group; (5) Sports team; (6) Singing group; (7) Multiple; (9) Other (specify) __________; (0) Not linked; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 23. Has youth ever engaged in any formal avocational training? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 23a. If yes, nature? (1) Music; (2) Handicrafts; (3) Sport; (4) Dancing; (7) Multiple; (9) Other (specify) ______________; (0) Never engaged; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 24. Does youth have any physical disease, illness or handicap? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 24a. If yes, nature of problem? Specify ______________________; (0) Has no health problems; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 25. Does youth have any mental illness or handicap? (1) Yes; (2) No; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

☐ 25a. If yes, nature of problem? (1) Mental Retardation; (2) "Emotional disturbance"; (3) Schizophrenia; (9) Other (specify) __________ (0) Has no mental problem; (X) NR; (Y) Unk.

Col. 78 thru here

26. Indicate problems of father which may have impaired his parenting ability and contributed to youth's dependency:
(1) Chronic unemployment; (2) Physical handicap;
(3) Mental handicap and institutionalization;
(4) Mental Retardation; (5) Alcoholism; (6) Adult delinquency and incarceration; (7) Multiple; (8) Educational deprivation;
(9) Desertion; (0) Deceased or other (specify) ________________;
(X) NR; (Y) Unk.

27. Indicate problems of mother which may have impaired her parenting ability and contributed to youth's dependency:
(1) Chronic unemployment; (2) Physical handicap;
(3) Mental handicap and institutionalization;
(4) Mental Retardation; (5) Alcoholism; (6) Adult delinquency and incarceration; (7) Multiple; (8) Educational deprivation;
(9) Desertion; (0) Deceased or other (specify) ________________;
(X) NR; (Y) Unk.

Col. 80 thru here

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28. List any unique or significant factors in regard to this case which might have implications for staff development or program considerations.

ED053393

AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF 51 YOUTH LIVING IN FOSTER HOMES

Project 410: Study Report #2

San Diego County
Department of Public Welfare

July, 1969

CG 006 378

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August 12, 1969

TO: AVIS RANA, CHIEF
SPECIAL PROGRAMS, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

FROM: DAVID C. PRITCHARD, PROJECT SUPERVISOR
PROJECT #410

The second report of a series of studies under Project #410 is hereby transmitted. This report is entitled An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Needs of 51 Youth Living in Foster Homes. This report analyzes the data collected from interviews with 51 youth between the ages of 16 and 21 receiving AFDC and living in foster homes in San Diego County.

The design for this study was formulated by the Project staff in June, 1969. Pilot interviews were conducted prior to the youth being seen later in June. The interviews were conducted by Mrs. Judith Marquette, Mrs. Elizabeth Mitchum and Mr. Edward Moncrief. In most instances the interviews were conducted in the youths' foster homes.

Department Research Analyst, Ollie James, provided consultation and technical assistance. The collected data was analyzed and the report prepared by J. McEwan Macintyre, Special Consultant for Research. Professor Norris E. Class, School of Social Work, University of Southern California, Project Consultant, participated in the planning and development of the study. Secretarial services were provided by Mrs. Pearlie Foster.

The cooperation of all district office personnel was appreciated by the Project staff.

Appreciation is expressed to all the youth who participated in the study and to their foster parents.

DCP:pbf

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Appendix A: Comparison of Characteristics of Total Group and Sample Interviewed

Appendix B: Youth Study Questionnaire

I. Introduction

This report describes the second segment of a study regarding the special characteristics and needs of certain older adolescents receiving out-of-home care under the auspices of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children programs (AFDC) in San Diego County, California. This report is based on interviews conducted with the youth.

On April 30, 1969 there were 237 youths between the ages of 16 and 21 receiving out-of-home care. Of this number, 151 were supervised by the County Probation Office; the remaining 86 were the responsibility of the County Department of Public Welfare. Information was collected from the case records during the months of March, April and May, 1969 on the characteristics of the 237 youth; this information was analyzed and reported in Study Report #1.

The second phase of the data-collecting part of the study was to interview as many of the 86 youth in boarding homes who were the responsibility of the Welfare Department as possible. By early June, however, when project workers were able to schedule interviews with the youth, only 51 of them proved to be available for an interview. The following table indicates the reasons why twenty-five of the original 86 youth were not interviewed as part of the study:

Reason	Number
Not interviewed-at social worker's request	3
-as severely mentally retarded	2
-at youth's request	3
-as presently living in foster homes out of County	2
Moved from foster home--whereabouts unknown	4
--out of County	4
--case closed	4
Project worker unable to make contact with youth	3
Living in boarding school, institution, etc.	10
Interviews completed	51
	86

Before talking with the youth, the interviewers contacted their social workers. If the social workers felt that it would not be in the youth's best interest to be interviewed (because of a recent move, emotional upset, etc.) he was not seen. Those youth known to be severely mentally retarded were not interviewed, although some of them do live in foster homes. Three of the youth chose not to be interviewed when they were approached; they had their own reasons for this, and these reasons were respected. Two youth lived out of the County at a distance too far to be included in the study, and three did not respond to letters, telephone calls and visits to their homes. The ten youth living in institutions under AFDC auspices are to be the subject of a later report.

The frequency of characteristics in the group that were interviewed and the total group of youth presently supervised by the Welfare Department were compared and proved to be quite consistent with regard to sex, age, ethnic background, and age at onset of out-of-home care.* Analysis tends to indicate that the findings from the group interviewed probably are not different from the findings that would be available if the total group were interviewed.

The interviews were conducted during June, 1969 by three project staff members. In all cases the youth were interviewed by a person of the same sex. In most instances the interviews were conducted in the foster home, but if either the interviewer or the youth felt that privacy could not easily be obtained within the home, the youth was seen elsewhere. The foster parents were aware of the interviews being held and in most cases respected the youth's privacy.

The results of the interviews with the youth--18 males and 33 females--are presented within the following areas: the youth, relationships with own family, out-of-home living arrangements, relationship with social worker, education, vocation, social philosophy, and critique of the foster home program.

This report is based on the results of interviews with the youth to obtain understanding of the youth's view of himself in his situation. No attempt has been made in this report to correlate the answers given by the youth with material in the case record; this may be the subject of a later Study Report.

II. The Youth

The interviewers were positively impressed with the youths' ability to handle the questions asked of them, to participate in a thoughtful way in discussing foster care and their own experiences, and their general appearance.

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* See Appendix A, p. 25 for specific comparisons

Forty of the youth (78 percent) were reported by the interviewers as showing an "excellent" or "good" degree of self-confidence; however, eleven youth (22 percent) were rated as exhibiting only a "fair" or "poor" degree of self-confidence.

The youth were asked direct questions regarding themselves in their present situation. Forty-six youth (90 percent) feel themselves to be "very happy" or "fairly happy", only five youth (10 percent) feel either "fairly unhappy" or "very unhappy". Rating their own physical appearance, the largest group--38 youth (74 percent) see themselves as "average" or "good". Twelve youth (24 percent) rated their physical appearance as "excellent" or "very good", only one youth rated himself as having "poor" physical appearance. The overall ratings of the youth given by the interviewers tended to be higher than the youth gave themselves.

The majority of the youth regard themselves as being in "excellent" or "very good" health at this time; 27 (53 percent) feel that they fall within these categories. Twenty-two youth (43 percent) feel that they have "good" or "average" health, two youth (4 percent) feel their health might be classified as "poor". Thirty-six youth (71 percent) state that they have been sick in bed for two days or less during the past year. However, 43 youth (84 percent) state that they have missed some time from school because of sickness during that same period.

Finances

Almost all, 49 (96 percent), of the youth state that they have spending money of their own. Twenty-six (51 percent) of the youth earn their own spending money, nineteen (37 percent) receive allowances from their foster parents. Most of the youth feel that they have about the same amount of money as their friends; thirty (59 percent) feel this way. Twelve youth (24 percent) feel that they have less than their friends, eight youth (16 percent) state that they believe they have more money than their friends. Most of the youth, 30 (59 percent), feel that they could use more money if it were available to them. The most common item that more money would be used for, according to the youth, would be to buy additional clothing; nineteen youth (37 percent) stated this. Buying an automobile and paying expenses incurred in attending school activities, especially in the senior year of high school, are items for which the youth wished additional funds.

When asked to estimate the amount of money necessary for an adequate monthly allowance, exclusive of clothing, one-third of the youth felt that $20 would be adequate, one-third felt that $21 to $40 was needed, 27 percent felt that over $40 was needed; three youth (6 percent) were unable to give an estimate. This money would be used for transportation, snacks, cosmetics, cigarettes, etc.

The youth were asked their reaction to getting an allowance paid directly to them for spending money from the Welfare Department. Thirty-three youth (65 percent) felt this would be a good idea; twelve youth (24 percent) did not, and three youth (5 percent) were uncertain. Most of the youth who felt that there should be such an allowance felt that it should begin before the youth attains the age of sixteen years; the remainder felt that it should begin on the youth's sixteenth birthday.

Although the youth tended to present the idea of using additional money to buy clothing, most of them did feel that they had about as many clothes as the others in their classes at school. Most of the youth choose their own clothing when shopping by themselves or with a friend; 17 youth (33 percent) state that their foster mother accompanies them when buying clothing.

Most of the youth, 38 (75 percent) state that they usually have transportation when they need it. Difficulty with transportation most often centers around the foster family's car either being unavailable to the youth or the fact that no one in the foster family has the time or the inclination to drive the youth.

The youth in the sample are generally not known to the police. Nine of the youth (18 percent) have been questioned with regard to shoplifting or traffic violations or other charges. The majority of the youth report that they have had no contact with the police authorities. It should be noted, however, that some of these youth have been supervised earlier by the County Probation Office.

Personality Characteristics

The youth were asked if they could change themselves in some way, how would they wish to change. Six of the males and four of the females could think of no way, but most of the youth did have some ideas about changes they would prefer to see in themselves. There was a difference in the type of response between the males and females. Personality changes with regard to more self-control were frequently mentioned by the females, 18 (55 percent); but only three of the males (17 percent) mentioned similar wishes. Six of the males (33 percent) stated a wish to have increased skills or abilities; none of the females gave this answer. Seven of the females (21 percent) wished for physical changes--to be taller, thinner--none of the males expressed a similar wish. Three of the females wished to be more understanding of others, none of the males verbalized this.

Thirty-one youth (61 percent) estimated that they would be "much happier" or "happier" ten years from now. The reasons most often given for this optimism were that the youth would be functioning as independent adults by that time; the answer most often given by the girls was that by that time they hoped to be married and settled into their own home raising their own family; almost one-half the youth gave one of these two answers to support their prediction of being happier in ten years time.

III. Youth's Relationship With Own Family

When asked if they felt that youth receiving out-of-home care should maintain contact with their own families, forty-six (90 percent) felt that they should. Of this number, 24 (47 percent) felt contact should definitely be maintained, 22 (43 percent) felt contact should "sometimes" be maintained. Only five (10 percent) of the youth felt that young people in foster homes should not have contact with their own families. Many youth felt that the choice of maintaining contact or not was an individual matter; 17 (33 percent) of the youth felt this way. Eighteen (35 percent) of the youth feel that maintaining contact with their parents and siblings helps them to understand their situation better, and they feel that it is essential for them to know who their own parents are. The youth who do not wish to maintain contact cite factors such as "renews old issues", "embarrassing to see own parents" and the feeling that, at times, their parents do not wish to see them.

Most of the youth know the whereabouts of their parents. Thirty-four (67 percent) of the youth know the whereabouts of their mothers; the mothers of 15 (29 percent) of the youth are deceased, only two (4 percent) do not know where their mothers presently live. Fewer youths know the whereabouts of their fathers. Although 23 (45 percent) of the youth know where their fathers live, 14 (27 percent) do not; a further 13 (25 percent) of the youth's fathers are deceased.

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The location of the youths' parents as reported by the youths:

Location	Mother	Father
In the same City	12 (24%)	9 (18%)
In the same County	9 (18%)	2 (4%)
In the same State	4 (8%)	6 (12%)
In a different State	7 (14%)	5 (10%)
Mexico	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
Deceased	15 (29%)	13 (25%)
Other	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
Whereabouts unknown	1 (2%)	14 (27%)
	51	51

Mothers of the youth are more likely both to maintain contact and to be in touch with them more frequently than fathers. Although 16 (31 percent) of the mothers are reported by the youth to be in contact with them at least monthly on the average, only 7 (14 percent) of the fathers are reported to be in such close touch. Face-to-face visits are the most usual type of contact between the youth and his parents. Twenty-two (43 percent) of the youths visit with their mothers from time-to-time, twelve (24 percent) of the youths visit with their fathers.

The majority of the youth stated that they receive encouragement from their foster parents to maintain contact with their own family members. Thirty (59 percent) of the youth feel encouraged in this regard by their foster parents. Within the group of twenty-one (41 percent) who replied negatively to this question were a number of youth who state that they need no encouragement, and some who have no parents available for the youth to be in contact with. In the main, the youth do feel that their foster parents welcome members of their own families when they do visit with the youth in the foster home. Only nine (18 percent) of the youth did not feel that their own relatives were made to feel welcome by their foster parents.

IV. Out-of-Home Living Arrangements

With regard to out-of-home living arrangements, the youth were asked questions with regard to their previous out-of-home care, their present living situation and were invited to give their views on alternative types of care that might be more suited to them in the future.

A. Previous Out-of-Home Care

Questions concerning the age at which the youth left their own homes, reasons for having to live away from home, and the number of boarding home placements that the youth remembered were asked of the youth.

Most of the youth in the study moved away from their own homes when they were young teenagers. Twenty-six (51 percent) of the youth remember that they first left their own homes when they were between the ages of 13 and 17. Eleven (22 percent) of the youth began out-of-home care before they were 7 years of age. Nine youth (18 percent) moved away from their own homes when they were between the ages of 7 and 13. Four youth (8 percent) first moved to out of home care after they had reached their 17th birthday.

Their parents' inability to adequately care for them was the prime reason the youth gave for needing out-of-home care. Twenty-four (47 percent) of the youth moved away from their own homes as the result of parental illness or handicap, their being neglected, or their parents otherwise being unable to care for them. Sixteen (31 percent) of the youth moved into out-of-home care as a result of desertion by their parents, death of their parent or their parent being incarcerated or hospitalized. Six of the youth (12 percent) state that they first moved to out-of-home care as a result of their own actions--either being beyond the control of their parent(s) or acting in a delinquent manner.

Many youth report that they have been in only one foster home; twenty (39 percent) state that they have had only one placement. A further twenty (39 percent) have had either two or three placements. Ten (20 percent) have had four or more placements that they remember.

B. Present Living Situation

Seventeen (33 percent) of the youth report that they have lived in their present foster home for less than one year. A further 13 (25 percent) state that they have lived in their present home between one and three years. Twelve (24 percent) of the youth have lived between three and ten years in their present home. Four have been with their present foster parents for eleven years or more.

Eighteen (35 percent) of the youth feel that they were mainly responsible, themselves, for finding their present home. Relatives were responsible for securing homes for 10 of the youth (20 percent). Nine youth (18 percent) believe that social workers from the Department of Public Welfare were mainly responsible for finding their present accommodation; nine (18 percent) felt that probation officers from the County Probation Office had the major responsibility in placing them in their present home.

The majority, 38 (75 percent), feel that they participated in choosing their present home. This was achieved mostly by the youth visiting in the home and talking to the proposed foster parent(s) before actually moving into the home to stay. Ten (20 percent) of the youth knew their present foster parents as neighbors prior to going to live with them.

Thirty-seven (73 percent) of the youth report that they are well satisfied with their present foster home placement. A further 5 youth (10 percent) state that they are partly satisfied; only 9 youth (18 percent) say that they feel there is equal weighting between satisfactory and unsatisfactory aspects of their placement or that they are openly dissatisfied with it. Correlation of age of the youth and their satisfaction with the present placement gives:

Age of youth	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total youth
16	7 (20%)	3 (21%)	10 (20%)
17	9 (25%)	4 (28%)	13 (25%)
18	13 (35%)	4 (28%)	17 (33%)
19	7 (20%)	2 (13%)	9 (18%)
20	1 (3%)	1 (7%)	2 (4%)
	37	14	51

This table shows that more youth are satisfied than dissatisfied at each age level, but that more 17 and 18 year olds have some feeling of dissatisfaction than those younger or older.

Twenty-five (49 percent) of the youth volunteered that what they like best about their present living situation is that it is the kind of place in which they feel at home and where there is a warm atmosphere. Twenty-two (43 percent) of the youth could offer no particular dislikes at all about their foster homes. Almost all the youth, 49 (96 percent) felt the food to be to their liking in the home.

In most instances there are other young persons in the home as well as the youth in out-of-home care. Forty-three (84 percent) of the youth state that there are other minors in the home. The average number of other children or youth in the home is 2.4; in most instances there are either one or two other children in the home, although twelve have either three or four other children. Thirty-eight (75 percent) of the youth who are sharing a home with the natural children feel that they get along either very well or "average" with them, only four of the youth (8 percent) feel that they have a poor relationship with the other children in the home.

When the youth were asked to identify characteristics of their foster fathers that they either liked or disliked, most of them chose to mention aspects that indicated positive relationships between the youth and the foster father. Forty-three (84 percent) could identify such characteristics as "showing his concern for me", "happy disposition", "easy to talk with". Fourteen youth (27 percent) replied with negative attributes such as they felt the foster father to be "overly critical", "unpredictable" or did not wish to answer the question.* As with the question dealing with the foster father, when asked about the foster mother, three times as many positive attributes were mentioned as negative ones. Thirty (59 percent) of the youth spoke of liking "everything" about their foster mother, or focused on her ability not to show partiality to her own children, or highlighted her ability to reach out to the youth as they would wish an "own" mother would. The negative points that were raised by the youth with regard to the foster mother included such things as her treating the youth as if he were younger than his actual age, showing partiality to own children, and being overly critical or nagging the youth.

In general, the youth give the impression of feeling able to communicate quite well with the foster parents. Twenty-five (49 percent) state that they can talk over "everything" with their foster parents. School problems were those most often cited as being talked about. Only five (10 percent) of the youth feel unable to talk over things with their foster parents.

The youth were asked questions relating to the usual methods of discipline used by their foster parents and their own reaction to this discipline.

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* These figures do not add to 100 percent as some youth gave more than one answer.

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"Talking it over" is the most common approach used by foster parents when the youth do those things not approved of; twenty-nine (57 percent) of the youth state that this is the method most often used with them. Other disciplinary measures that are utilized are restriction of activities, in eight instances (16 percent), or being scolded by the foster parents--in 11 (22 percent) instances. Only one youth said that the need for disciplinary action on the part of the foster parents never occurred. The youth give the impression of generally agreeing with the disciplinary action that occurs and the need for it. Twenty-eight youth (55 percent) stated their agreement with their foster parents' actions, 11 (22 percent) rejected the need for disciplinary action or the method that was used. Correlating the method of discipline most often utilized with the age of the youth gives:

	Age of Youth										
	16		17		18		19		20		
Method of discipline	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	m	f	Total
Talking it over	3	2	3	4	2	8	3	2	-	2	29
Scolding, lecturing	1	1	-	2	2	3	1	1	-	-	11
Restrictions	-	3	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	8
Other	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
No disciplinary action	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	4	6	4	8	5	13	5	4	-	2	51

The chores that are most commonly expected of the youth are those that pertain to taking care of their own rooms, helping with the dishes and with the housework in general. Forty (78 percent) of the youth state that they are quite content to be involved in such activity, but eight (16 percent) indicated some feeling of resentment about the chores they were expected to do.

Forty-seven of the youth (92 percent) state that they feel that they are learning enough to be able to manage later when they are on their own from the experience in their present foster home. The others tended to feel that such knowledge was gained earlier than in their present placement.

Thirty-one of the youth (61 percent) state that they have their own room in their foster home. Half the youth who do not have their own room seem quite happy about that fact, but the other half would prefer a room to themselves. Twenty-four of the total group (47 percent) state that they are seldom in their rooms, a further 16 (31 percent) state that they are in their rooms only to sleep. Eleven (22 percent) state that they spend a great deal of time in their rooms.

C. Future Out-of-Home Living Arrangements

To obtain understanding of the youths' wishes with regard to future out of home living arrangements, they were asked questions regarding alternatives to boarding home care, budgeting responsibilities incurred in living independently, and sources of help if needed.

When asked the broad question regarding their thinking about living arrangements for youth, most of them stated their belief that foster homes were the best alternative to being in one's own home; twenty-nine (57 percent) felt this way. A sizeable number, however, felt that living independently in an apartment (perhaps with an understanding manager to turn to) would be a better living arrangement; fifteen (29 percent) of the youth gave this as their first choice. Correlating preferred living arrangements with the age of the youth gives:

Preferred type of accommodation	Age of Youth				
	16	17	18	19	20
foster home	7 (70%)	8 (67%)	9 (50%)	4 (44%)	1 (50%)
apartment	1 (10%)	4 (33%)	6 (33%)	3 (33%)	1 (50%)
group home	1 (10%)		1 (5%)		
depends on youth	1 (10%)		1 (5%)	2 (22%)	
no answer given			1 (5%)		
	10	12	18	9	2

Although living in foster homes is the choice most often given by the youth, the table does indicate an increasing interest in more independent living arrangements as the age of the youth increases. Both youth who preferred group homes were female, one aged 16, one 18.

When asked directly about living in a "group foster home" following a short description of such a home, the majority of the youth did not feel that such accommodation would suit them. Only nineteen (37 percent) were immediately positive in their reaction to this possibility. The most common positive aspect as seen by the youth regarding group homes was the possibility they offered for the youth to help each other, to be with others their own age and to have shared activities; twelve (24 percent) of the youth identified these possibilities as being important for them. On the other hand, however, eleven youth (22 percent) saw group homes as being potentially too competitive, and too prone to pettiness among the youth leading to friction between them. Nine youth (18 percent) stated their feeling that only in a foster home could their needs be met adequately--they needed the family members to turn to and to draw strength from.

The youth were asked if they felt that they could live alone. Most felt that they could--37 (73 percent); they felt that they could manage by themselves. Some felt that they had been living quite independent lives, at least in the emotional sense, for quite some time. Thirteen youth (25 percent) felt that they did not wish to live alone or were not responsible enough as yet in themselves to cope with such independence. The youth were pushed further with regard to independent living and asked the living arrangements that they would prefer if they were to live alone. The largest group, 25 (49 percent) stated their preference for an apartment by themselves, almost as many chose to live in an apartment with a roommate--23 (45 percent). Correlating living preference with age gives the following:

	Ages 16-17			Ages 18-20		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Apartment by self	5	6	11	10	4	14
Shared accommodation	1	9	10	1	12	13
Other	2	-	2	-	1	1
	8	15	23	11	17	28

The most obvious fact gathered from this correlation is that the males tend to wish to live independently, while the females prefer to share their living quarters with a friend about their own age.

Most of the youth have had experience handling money as a result of managing their own income from part-time employment--27 (53 percent); another fifteen (29 percent) have had experience as the result of managing their weekly or monthly allowances. Only six of the youth (12 percent) stated that they had no experience handling money.

When asked to complete a budget to cover their expenses if they were to be living alone, the largest number of youth--26 (51 percent) felt that they would need approximately two hundred dollars monthly to manage. Another sixteen (31 percent) predicted that they would need between $201 and $300 monthly.

When asked about specific responsibilities or tasks incurred in independent living, the youth felt the following might cause some concern for them, in descending order of importance: paying bills and budgeting, getting up in the morning, making essential repairs around their living quarters, getting enough sleep, and keeping their clothes mended.

Posed with the question "if you were living alone and got in trouble, who would you call to help you out?", the youths most frequently answered that they would call their foster parents; this answer was given in 18 (35 percent) of the cases; a further eight (16 percent) youth stated that they would call a relative. This same number, 8 (16 percent), said they would rely on a friend to be of assistance. Seven youth (14 percent) said that they would contact their social worker; only four (8 percent) felt that they would call their natural parents to ask for assistance. The remaining youth stated that they would call a sibling or someone else known to them.

V. Relationship with Social Worker

In discussing their relationship with the social workers from the County Department of Public Welfare, the youth were asked questions regarding the number of workers that had talked with them, the frequency of such contacts, their perception of the social worker's function, and asked to give examples of actions on the part of the social worker that improved the youth's situation for him.

The youth in this study have known many social workers. Almost one-half the youth--24 (47 percent)--have had three or more workers. Ten (20 percent) of the 24 report that they have had six or more workers. Sixteen youth (31 percent) report that they have had two workers assigned to them. Only seven of the youth (14 percent) continue to see the worker originally assigned to them.

Most of the youth report that they usually talk with their social worker less often than once a month. Twenty-one youth (41 percent) report that they see their workers either weekly or monthly. Twelve of the youth (24 percent) say that they see their social worker only three or four times a year.

When asked, specifically, the last time they had spoken with their social worker, the majority stated they had seen their worker in the last month--27 (53 percent). Fourteen youth (27 percent) state that they have seen their social worker at some time in the last year;

four (8 percent) could not remember when they saw their worker the last time. Most youth, (37 (73 percent) remember their last contact with the social worker as being initiated by the worker; twelve (24 percent) remembered calling the worker themselves.

The main function of the social worker in the minds of the youth interviewed appears to be to make sure that the present situation is suitable for the youth; twenty-nine youth (57 percent) identified this as the primary role. The worker's value as assisting with problems in general, or between the youth and his foster parents, was identified as important by nine (18 percent) of the youth. Five youth (10 percent) saw the worker as mainly providing concrete help such as additional funds for special needs. None of the youth identified working with their own family or helping them to make plans for the future as the prime task of the social worker.

When asked what the social worker had done to improve each youth's individual situation, budgeting and concrete services were named the most frequently; these were cited by twenty-one (41 percent) of the youth. Sixteen (31 percent) of the youth state that they either did not need help or did not receive any for another reason. Some of the tasks identified by the remainder of the youth as applying especially to them are: to give 'moral support" when it is needed, to "watch over" them in their living situation, or a person to turn to when problems arise and counseling is needed. Six youth (12 percent) were unable to determine a role for the social worker who visits them and their foster parents.

VI. Education

The youth were asked questions pertaining to their present grade level, likes and dislikes regarding school, their perception of themselves and their ability to be successful in their studies, the number of schools attended and wishes with regard to post-high school education.

The largest number of youth, 18 (35 percent), were in Grade 12 during the 1968-69 academic year, 12 (24 percent) were in Grade 11, and 11 (22 percent) were in lower grades. Ten (20 percent) of the youth were in college, university or other post-high school facility. Correlating the sex, age and grade of the youth in the study gives:

Age	School Grade 1968-69										
	9		10		11		12		Post-high		
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	Total
16	-	-	2	4	2	1	-	1	-	-	10
17	1	1	2	-	-	4	1	3	-	-	12
18	-	-	-	1	3	2	2	7	-	3	18
19	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	2	9
20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Total	1	1	4	5	5	7	5	13	3	7	51

This correlation shows that there are twice as many females as males in Grade 12 or enrolled in post-high school educational programs. It also shows that one-third of the 17 year olds are not in Grade 11, and one-third of the 18 year olds are not in Grade 12; in both instances these youth are enrolled in grades lower than would be expected. A significant number of the youth, 24 (47 percent) say that they have been held back at least one grade in school. Those that were held back most often repeated grades one, two or three. Twenty-seven youth (53 percent) have never had to repeat a grade in school.

When asked about lies and dislikes regarding school, the greatest number of youth reported disliking specific teachers or specific subjects--24 (47 percent). Only five youth (10 percent) made blanket statements with regard to disliking school in general. Eleven youth (22 percent) stated their liking for specific teachers or specific subjects. Their peer group and opportunity for extracurricular activities were identified by 11 (22 percent) of the youth as being particularly enjoyable aspects of school life.

Forty-four of the youth (86 percent) feel that they do as well as, or better than, the others in their classes. Only 7 (14 percent) see themselves as being below average in their school work. Thirty-nine (76 percent) of the youth see themselves as working as hard or harder than others in their classes, 12 (24 percent) see themselves as not working as hard as the average.

The youth tend to see success in school as depending upon their own activity. The need to study, to do homework and to keep up their grades was identified by 38 (75 percent) of the youth as being vital to success in school. Nine (18 percent) feel that getting along with the teachers is the most important factor in scholastic success.

Forty-two (82 percent) of the youth feel that they read as well as, or better than, the average student in their classes. Nine youth (18 percent), however, see themselves as reading more poorly than the average student.

The youth in the study have gone to many elementary and high schools. They have had little of the continuity of experience that comes with consistently attending the same school.

Number of elementary schools attended	Number of youth
1	8
2	15
3	8
4	6
5	8
6	3
7	2
not reported	1
	51

Number of high schools attended	Number of youth
1	4
2	15
3	11
4	10
5	3
6	4
7	4
	51

The median number of elementary schools that the youth have attended is 3; the median number of high schools attended is also 3.

Of the total group, only four youth (8 percent) did not feel that they were likely to finish high school successfully. Poor grades were the most frequently stated reason for not graduating.

Thirty-eight (75 percent) of the youth state that they would like to continue their education after high school. Thirty (59 percent) hope to attend a junior college or university, eight (16 percent) would prefer to complete some type of business or vocational training program.

VII. Vocational Aspirations

Questions asked of the youth relating to their vocational aspirations covered the areas of summer employment, post-high school education, aptitude testing, persons to whom the youth turn for help and guidance in determining a vocation, barriers to success and the elements that the youth look for in making the important decision regarding their first job after leaving school.

Although 46 (90 percent) of the youth wished to secure employment during the summer months, when they were interviewed in June, 1969, only 24 (47 percent) had been assured of employment. The most common area of employment hoped for was as unskilled laborers by the males and in clerical or sales work by the females.

Twenty-six (51 percent) of the youth indicate that they have taken vocational aptitude or other tests; 25 (49 percent) state that they have not had the opportunity to take such tests. Only 11 (22 percent) of the youth who say that they have had testing remember a school counselor discussing the results with them. Thirty-six (71 percent) of the youth state that they would like to undergo some testing with regard to their aptitude for different vocations.

Their foster parents are the ones to whom the youth turn most frequently to discuss vocational plans. Twenty-eight (55 percent) of the youth state their foster parents discuss such matters with them. School counselors and social workers were each mentioned by nine (18 percent) of the youth. These same persons are also seen by the youth as being helpful to them in achieving what they wish to do vocationally.

Fifteen (29 percent) of the youth are optimistic with regard to their ability to achieve job or training plans; they could think of nothing that would stand in the way. Lack of money, however, was stated by ten (20 percent) of the youth as a possible barrier to success.

Eight (16 percent) of the youth feel that there are physical health factors that might affect future job or training programs; these youth have chronic medical conditions such as heart disease or epilepsy.

In thinking of themselves in the work force, the youth identified "enjoyment of the work itself" as the most important factor in 20 (39 percent) of the cases. "Friendly people to work with" was seen as the most important factor in 13 (25 percent) instances. "Security of steady work" was of prime importance to nine (18 percent) of the youth. "High income" was the most important factor in only six (12 percent) of the youth.

VIII. Social Philosophy

Questions were asked of the youth to gather information with regard to their views on drinking, smoking, use of narcotics, the police, the older generation, and to get some impression of how they viewed the future.

When asked about the harmfulness of smoking, drinking and the use of narcotics, most of the youth felt that LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) was harmful, that barbiturates were almost as harmful, and that in descending degrees of harmfulness were marijuana, cigarettes and liquor. The following table gives the incidence of "harmful" estimates by the young persons interviewed:

Substance	Incidence (n=51)
LSD	47 (92%)
Barbiturates	46 (90%)
Marijuana	40 (78%)
Cigarette smoking	35 (69%)
Liquor	27 (53%)

None of the young people interviewed felt that either LSD or barbiturates were not harmful, although 16 (31 percent) of the youth felt that using alcohol was not necessarily harmful. Three (6 percent) youth felt that smoking was not harmful, and four (8 percent) felt that marijuana was not harmful.

The majority of the youth questioned feel that when young people become delinquent it is the result of their "doing just what everyone else is doing"; thirty-one (61 percent) felt this way. Eleven (22 percent) of the youth felt that delinquent acts occurred when young persons know what is wrong, but do not care enough to stop themselves. Five (10 percent) of the youth feel that delinquencies are generally the result of the youth not knowing any better or the result of chance or very great temptation.

The youth indicate a generally positive attitude toward the police in twenty-seven (53 percent of the cases. Twenty (39 percent) feel that the police are very uneven in their performance; four (8 percent) feel that the police tend to be unfair in the performance of their duties.

Many of the youth feel that things of importance can be learned from "the older generation". Thirty (59 percent) state that they feel they can learn "some things", fifteen (29 percent) that they can learn "a lot" from their elders. Six (12 percent) of the youth, however, were either not sure or felt they could learn nothing of any importance from the older generation.

Although only slightly over one-half the youth, 26 (51 percent), state that they are active members of a church, 43 (84 percent) state that they regard religion as being either moderately important or very important. Only eight youth state that they have little or no interest in religion or have no opinion on the matter.

When asked their views with regard to their own future, the majority of youth, 30 (59 percent), see themselves as getting married within the next five years; eleven (22 percent), at some later date. Although only four (21 percent) of the males expect their wives to work, 23 (45 percent) of the females expect to work after marriage. Thirty-three (65 percent) of the youth state their wish to live in the suburbs or the country when they are married, only sixteen (29 percent) wish to live in the city. The youth have hopes of living in a house they are buying in the majority of cases--34 (67 percent), the remainder hope to live in a rented house or apartment; none wishes to live with parents or other relatives. Almost all the youth, 46 (90 percent) state that they wish to have children of their own after marriage, only five (10 percent) were not sure about this or felt that they did not wish to have any. A family with two or three children appears to be the wish that the youths have for themselves.

IX. Critique of Foster Home Program

When asked about ways for improving the foster home program, twenty-three youth (45 percent) had comments to make about their relationships with the Welfare Department: ten youth (20 percent) repeated their wish for a personal allowance, eight youth (16 percent) wished for more contact with their social worker, six youth (12 percent) spoke of the need for privacy during their sessions alone with the social worker and for increased confidentiality on the workers' part.

Fifteen youth (29 percent) spoke of the need for additional compensation to foster parents and the need for an increased number of suitable foster homes. Three youth spoke of a wish for increased three-way communication between the youth, social worker and foster parents.

X. Summary

Fifty-one youth between the ages of 16 and 21 living in boarding homes and receiving out-of-home care under the AFDC program were interviewed in June, 1969. The results of these interviews have been analyzed and reported.

The median age of the youth in the sample group was 18 years; more females than males were represented; racial background was most often Caucasian. The largest percentage of youth left their own homes during their early adolescent years. These characteristics are consistent with those of the total group of youth whose out-of-home care is under the supervision of the County Welfare Department.

Many of the youth in the study have been in their present boarding home for less than one year.

The youth, as a group, made a positive impression on their interviewers. Their appearance, cooperation and ability to answer the questions asked of them as well as their apparent degree of self-confidence received positive ratings by the interviewers.

In general, the youth tend to see themselves as happy, in good physical condition and having a good physical appearance. However, there was a tendency for the overall ratings of the youth made by the interviewers to be higher than the youth gave themselves.

Almost all the youth have had experience handling money that they have either earned or received as an allowance from their foster parents. Most of the youth wish that they had more money. To buy additional clothing was the most often identified use for additional money. The majority of the youth would appreciate getting an allowance paid directly to themselves from the County Welfare Department, rather than coming from their foster parents.

Less than twenty percent of the youth in the sample state that they have had any contact with the police as a result of their behavior.

Although they are living apart from their parents, most of the youth interviewed feel that it is important for them to maintain contact with their parents. Most of the youth do know the whereabouts of their parents, but mothers of the youth are more likely to be in contact with them than fathers. Foster parents are seen as encouraging visits by the youth with his own family members in most instances.

Most of the youth have been in three boarding home placements or less. One-third of the group have lived in their present home for less than one year. A sizeable number of the youth located their present home themselves. Almost all the youth felt that they participated in the decision that they would move into their present home. Most of the youth feel satisfied with their present living arrangement; they appreciate the efforts that their foster parents put forward to make them feel at home with them.

In most of the foster homes there are other children or youth in addition to the youth receiving out-of-home care. The youth tend to feel that they get along with these other young people at least as well as they would with their own siblings.

In talking about their foster parents, the youth tend to identify positive aspects of the care that they are receiving rather than mention negative factors. The youth appear to feel that they can generally communicate quite well about matters that concern them with their foster parents. In their minds, discipline appears to be handled in a way that is acceptable to them in most instances. Most of the youth are responsible for some housekeeping chores in the home and appear to be content about this.

Not all of the youth have their own rooms to sleep in, but this does not appear a matter of very great concern to them.

The youth tend to see foster homes as being the best alternative living arrangement to being in their own homes. Some, however, would prefer to live quite independent lives in apartments of their own, probably with a friend of the same sex to share costs. The majority of youth did not feel that group living homes would be as suitable as foster homes or their own apartments.

The youth interviewed state that they have had many social workers assigned to them. Less than one-half of the youth remember seeing their social worker as often as monthly. The main role for the social worker in the minds of the youth is to make sure that their present living situation is suitable for them. Concrete services were most often cited as examples of the assistance the youth had received from the social workers.

The youth have attended many schools. The median number of elementary schools that have been attended is three; the median number of high schools is also three. Almost one-half the youth have been held back at least one grade in school, however, less than ten percent do not feel that they will complete their high school education successfully. Most of the youth wish further education after completion of high school, the majority hope to attend a junior college or university. Some would prefer to complete a business or vocational program.

Most of the youth hope to work during the summer months. However, in the latter part of June, less than one-half of them had been assured of employment. One-half of the youth report that they have had aptitude testing while in school, less than fifty percent of this number remember any type of meaningful discussion of the results with a school counselor. Most of the youth state that they would like to have the opportunity for further testing.

The youth in the study tended to perceive cigarette smoking as being more harmful than liquor. Using LSD was seen as harmful by almost all the youth; use of barbiturates was seen as almost as harmful; marijuana was not seen as harmful as were the other two substances, although a large majority did see it as harmful.

The youth tend to perceive delinquency as resulting from a person going along with his crowd or doing what everyone else is doing. Their attitude toward the police was generally positive, although some did feel that the police tended to be unfair at times.

The youth tend to have an optimistic expectation with regard to their future. They expect to see themselves at least as happy, to be more independent, to be "settled down", married and with a family of their own.

In general, the youth tend to have opinions with regard to the treatment that they have had and wish to receive. They speak of wishing to see their social workers more often, to have their confidences honored, to have their opinions asked in matters pertaining to themselves. Increased financial assistance to their foster parents was identified as important by a number of the youth as was a wish for an allowance paid directly to them by the Welfare Department.

Certain items that were identified in the interviews with the youth have special relevance for future planning by the Department:

1. The fact that the youth tend to see themselves in somewhat less favorable light than the interviewers may suggest that the youths' feelings of self-worth may need additional support on the part of the social workers.

2. Although not all the youth are able to maintain contact with their own parents, most of them wish such contacts. The youth appear to find value in understanding their parents' situation and the reasons why they no longer live with them.

3. The youth have been considerably involved in the home-finding and home-selecting phases of their out-of-home care. As many youth say they found their present foster home themselves as say their homes were found by either social workers or probation officers. There is no way of knowing whether this pattern occurred out of necessity because the department has in the past had no formal recruitin/certifying programs to secure family homes for youth 16 and over. Whether youth can be effective in "finding homes" for other youth or only for themselves remains a matter for further exploration. Further exploration would be necessary also to determine which method of recruiting brings about most satisfactory placements from the point of view of youth, foster parents, and agency.

4. Although more and more is being written at this time with regard to the value for youth of group-living homes, the youth in this study state a preference for either foster homes or apartment-living. Either of these choices more closely approximates the usual living pattern of the older teenager in the community. Experimentation with a range of living arrangements currently available in the community, including a variety of resources for advice and guidance with problems as they arise, may provide useful information about transitional requirements for AFDC youth on their way to adult independence.

5. Many youth state that they would appreciate the opportunity to take additional tests to assist them in making appropriate vocational plans suitable to their aptitudes. The youth generally do not see the Welfare Department social worker as the person to help in developing educational/vocational plans.

Yet there seem to be no meaningful connections with other resources, either, except the foster parents in some instances. Perhaps a special early program of educational/vocational guidance from some resource would be appropriate for the youth.

6. Most of the youth state that they wish to continue their education after completing high school. Whether such a plan is suitable for their vocational goal or in line with their aptitudes can only be determined by further exploration. Their statements reflect current generalities about the importance of education to future success.

7. While most all these youth have had some money to manage, they (like most other young people their age) have not had responsibility to "balance a budget." Many of them see money management as a problem in moving toward more independent living arrangements. Some experimentation with the youth as his own payee may clarify whether this group of young people need special help in money management.

A

Appendix A: Comparison of Characteristics of Total Group and Sample Interviewed

Thirty-three (65 percent) of the 51 youth interviewed are female; this compares closely with the fact that 55 of the 86 youth in the Welfare group are female--64 percent. The following table compares the age of youth in the Welfare group with those in the interviewed group.

Age	Total group	Sample group
16	18 (21%)	10 (20%)
17	25 (29%)	12 (23%)
18	29 (34%)	18 (35%)
19	11 (13%)	9 (18%)
20	3 (3%)	2 (4%)
	86	51

A correlation of the sex and ethnic background of the youth in the Welfare group and the same group gives the following:

Ethnic group	Male		Female	
	Total	Sample	Total	Sample
Caucasian	14 (45%)	9 (50%)	33 (60%)	21 (64%)
Mexican-American	7 (23%)	4 (22%)	9 (16%)	4 (12%)
Negro	3 (10%)	1 (5%)	6 (11%)	5 (15%)
Other	7 (22%)	4 (22%)	7 (13%)	3 (9%)
	31	18	55	33

The age of youth at the onset of out-of-home care correlates closely between the Welfare group and the sample group:

Age	Total group	Sample group
3 or less	13 (15%)	9 (18%)
4-9 years	13 (15%)	7 (14%)
10-15 years	30 (35%)	19 (37%)
16 years or older	27 (31%)	16 (31%)
Unknown	3 (4%)	
	86	51

B

YOUTH STUDY INTERVIEW

PROJECT 410 - NEEDS OF OLDER CHILDREN LIVING AWAY FROM HOME

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Youth Study Number ____________

Youth Name ________________________________ Social Survey No. ________________

Address ____________________________________ Telephone No. ______________

Foster Parent Name ____

Social Worker Name ______________________________ District No. _________

Interviewed by __________________________________

Date _______________ Time Began _________ End _________ Approx. Length _______

Place of Interview ____

Private ______________________________ Others Present ____________________

Note any special circumstances ____

____

Last Name ____________________

Social Survey No. __________

II. TYPOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION

1. Age (1) ________
2. Sex (2) ________
3. Ethnic Group (3) ______________
4. Placement (4) ________________
5. Religion (5) ________________
6. Illegitimacy (7) ________________
7. Father's Whereabouts (8a) ____________________
8. Father in Contact with Youth (8b) ________________
9. Mother's Whereabouts (9a)_________________
10. Mother in Contact with Youth (9b) ____________
11. Dependent Ward of Court (11a)_______________
12. Delinquent Ward of Court (12a) ________________
13. Age at time of initial out of home placement (15)________
14. Youth's family received Public Assistance prior to placement (16) ________________

14a Length of time (16b) ______________

15. Total out of home care (17) _____________
16. Length of time in current placement (17b) ____________
17. Types of out of home care (17d) _______________________
18. Long term institutional care (17h) __________________
19. Grade in school (18a) _____________
20. Special classes in school (18d) ________________
21. Physical illness or handicap (24a) _____________________
22. Mental illness or handicap (25a) _____________________

YOUTH STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

III. CURRENT SITUATION

0. We want to ask you some questions about how you're getting along now, how you feel about certain things and your opinion on certain subjects.

☐ 1a. One thing we've been taling about with young people is what kinds of things they do well and enjoy doing. What are some of the things that you do well and enjoy doing? ____________
____

☐ 1b. How much do you get a chance for ____________ these days?

____ daily
____ weekly
____ monthly
____ infrequently
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 1c. What are some of the other things that you enjoy doing in your leisure time? ______________________________
____

☐ 2a. About how many evenings a week do you spend away from home?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐ 2b. What do you do? ______________________________

YOUTH STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

- 2 -

☐ 2c. How do you spend your weekends? ____________________________
____

☐ 3a. Do you belong to any groups or clubs at school or in the community? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 3b. Which ones? ____________________________________
____

____ YM(W)CA
____ Scouting
____ Boys Clubs
____ Church groups
____ Sports teams
____ Singing groups
____ Other
____ Multiple
____ None

☐ 3c. Do you attend regularly? Yes ____ No ____

☐ 4. Would you rather spend your spare time: alone ____, with one or two friends ____, with a group of friends ____, other ____?

☐ 5a. Do foster parents encourage you to bring your friends home? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 5b. Same sex ____, opposite sex ____, both ____.

☐ 5c. If foster parents permit this, do you feel comfortable or not in inviting them? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 5d. Why is that? ____________________________________
____

☐ 6a. Do you go out on dates? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 6b. Do you go steady? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 6c. For how long? ____________

____ Less than month
____ 1 - 6 months
____ 7 - 12 months
____ 1 year or more

☐ 7a. How do you feel that you get along with the other kids your age?

____ well
____ uncertain
____ poor

☐ 7b. Why is that? ______________________________
____

☐ 8. Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are these days?

____ very happy
____ fairly happy
____ fairly unhappy
____ very unhappy

☐ 9. Compared with others you age, how would you rate your physical appearance?

____ excellent
____ very good
____ good
____ average
____ poor
____ very poor

☐ 10. Which of the following best describes your usual health right now?

____ excellent
____ very good
____ good
____ average
____ poor
____ very poor

☐ 11a. What is the longest period of time that you have ever been in bed for sickness or an accident?

____ up to one week
____ up to one month
____ up to three months
____ up to six months
____ up to one year
____ more than one year

☐ 11b. How many times have you been sick in bed (as much as a day) in the past year?

____ none
____ one or two
____ three or four
____ five or six
____ seven or eight
____ nine or more

☐ 11c. Have you missed any school because of sickness? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 11d. If yes, how much? ______________________________
____

____ less than one week
____ 1 - 2 weeks
____ 3 - 4 weeks
____ more than four weeks

☐ 12a. How many times have you been treated by a doctor (outside of school) for injury or accident in the past six months?

____ none
____ one
____ two
____ three
____ four
____ five or more

☐ 12b. Do you take any medicine or pills prescribed by a doctor? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 12c. Do you take any medicine or pills not prescribed by a doctor? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 13a. Do you get severe headaches?

____ often ____ sometimes ____ never

☐ 13b. Do you have asthma? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 13c. Do you have any allergies? Yes ____ No ____.

MONEY: Now I have some questions about money.

☐ 14a. Do you have spending money? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 14b. Where does it come from?

____ allowance from F/p
____ employment
____ natural parent
____ relative
____ other (specify) _______
____

☐ 15. Is the amount of money that you have available about: the same as your friends ____, less than most of your friends ____, more than your friends ____.

☐ 16a. Now, all in all, how do you feel about the money you have--is it enough for you, or could you use more? Enough ____, Need more ____.

☐ 16b. Can you tell me the reasons you'd like more money? ________
____

☐ 16c. Are there any other things that you would like but can't have because it costs too much? (specify) ____________________
____

☐ 16d. All in all, how much would you say kids your age need to have? ______________________________

____ $0 - 10 monthly
____ 11 - 20 monthly
____ 21 - 40 monthly
____ 41 - 60 monthly
____ 61 - 80 monthly
____ 81 - 100 monthly
____ 101+ monthly

☐ 16e. Should kids your age in foster care get an allowance from the Welfare Department? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 16f. At what age? 16 17 18 19 20

☐ 17a. As far as clothing is concerned, do you have about as many clothes as the others in your class at school? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 17b. Are they the right kind? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 17c. If no, why not? ______________________________
____

☐ 17d. Do you choose your own clothes? Yes ____ No ____ all ____ some ____.

☐ 17e. Who goes with you? ________________________________

____ Foster parent
____ Natural parent
____ Relative (specify) _____
____
____ Sibling
____ Friend
____ Other (specify) ______
____

☐ 18a. Do you have transportation when you need it? Yes ____ No ___

☐ 18b. Is it easy or difficult to get transportation to go places? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 18c. Why is that? ________________________________
____

19. Of the following chores, which do you have to do in the home: (Use "F" for most frequent chore carried out)

☐ 19a. ____ Take care of your own room

☐ 19b. ____ Help prepare meals

☐ 19c. ____ Help with dishes

☐ 19d. ____ Help with laundry

☐ 19e. ____ Help with housework

☐ 19f. ____ Help with yard work

☐ 19g. ____ Do errands or shopping

☐ 19h. ____ Take care of your own clothing

☐ 19i. ____ Baby-sitting

☐ 19j. ____ Other (specify) ________________________________

☐ 19k. How do you feel about doing these things?

____ resent it
____ seems fine
____ happy to
____ other ________________

☐ 20. From your experience in the home, do you feel you're learning enough to be able to manage your own place by yourself later on? Yes ____ No ____.

21. Regarding yourself, how do you feel about:

☐ 21a. Smoking? ____ harmful ____ uncertain
____ not harmful ____ no opinion

☐ 21b. Drinking? ____ harmful ____ uncertain
____ not harmful ____ no opinion

☐ 21c. Marijuana ____ harmful ____ uncertain
____ not harmful ____ no opinion

☐ 21d. Speed or barbiturates? ____ harmful ____ uncertain
____ not harmful ____ no opinion

☐ 21e. LSD ____ harmful ____ uncertain
____ not harmful ____ no opinion

☐ 22. When kids your age get into trouble (become delinquent) do you think this is generally a result of: a) Not knowing better ____, b) Knowing it's wrong but not caring ____, c) Chance or very great temptation ____, d) Just doing what everybody else is doing ____.

☐ 23. What do you think of the police? ______________________________
____

____ generally pretty good (doing a satisfactory job).
____ very uneven in their performance (some do good, some bad)
____ are unfair, and sometimes, even are brutal.

☐ 24. By and large, do you think kids can learn from the older generation:

____ a lot ____ really nothing important
____ some things ____ not sure

☐ 25a. How do you regard religion?

____ Very important ____ Little or no interest
____ Moderately important ____ No opinion

☐ 25b. Are you an active member of a church? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 25c. If yes, what church? ______________________________

Next we have some questions about how you're feeling these days--some of the things you're happy about, and some of the things you're not too happy about.

☐ 26. What are some of the things that you feel pretty happy about these days? Try to include here everything that's important to you--your family, friends, school or other things you may be happy about our pleased with. ______________________________
____

☐ 27. Many kids have told us about things they're not completely happy about. What are some of the things you're not too happy about these days? ____________________

____

☐ 28. If you could change yourself in some way, how would you want to change ____________________

____

☐ 29. Compared to your life today, how do you think things will be in tem years from now--do you think things will be happier for you than they are now, not quite as happy, or what?

____ much happier
____ happier
____ the same
____ less happy
____ much less happy
____ it depends...on what? ____

____

☐ 30. Why is that? ____________________

____

IV. PREVIOUS OUT OF HOME CARE

0. Now let's talk about your having to live away from home.

☐ 31. How old were you when you first left your own home? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 years.

☐ 32. What was the reason for your first having to leave home?

____

____ Parental neglect
____ No parent available
____ Parental inadequacy
____ Parental illness or handicap
____ Parents deceased
____ Parents deserted
____ Parents(s) deceased
____ Youth beyond control
____ Delinquency of youth
____ Other (specify) ____

____

☐ 33a. How many foster homes have you been in? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☐ 33b. Which foster home has meant the most to you? ____________

☐ 33c. (If the present one:) How long did you stay there? ________ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 years.

☐ 33d. Why do you feel it meant more than the others? ____________

____

____

☐ 33e. How old were you when you moved there? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 years.

V. PRESENT OUT OF HOME CARE

O. . Now let's talk about where you're living now.

☐ 34. How long have you been with Mr. and Mrs. ( )? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 yrs.

☐ 35a. Who was mainly responsible for your coming to this home?

____ DPW
____ CPO
____ Youth himself
____ Relative
____ Friend
____ Other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 35b. Do you feel that you participated in choosing this home? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 35c. If yes, how? ______________________________
____

☐ 36. How satisfied are you living in this home?

____ well satisfied
____ partly satisfied
____ so-so
____ dissatisfied

☐ 37a. As you look at it, what do you particularly like about this home? ______________________________
____

☐ 37b. As you look at it, what do you particularly dislike about this home? ______________________________
____

☐ 38a. Do you have your own room? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 38b. If no, would you prefer to have your own room? Yes ____ No ____ N/A ____.

☐ 38c. How much time do you spend in your room?

____ only to sleep ____ seldom ____ a great deal

☐ 39a. How about the food? Is it o.k.? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 39b. Why? ______________________________

☐ 40a. Are there other kids in the home? Yes ____ No ____.

V. PRESENT OUT OF HOME CARE

0. . Now let's talk about where you're living now.

☐ 34. How long have you been with Mr. and Mrs. (   )? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 yrs.

☐ 35a. Who was mainly responsible for your coming to this home?

____ DPW
____ CPO
____ Youth himself
____ Relative
____ Friend
____ Other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 35b. Do you feel that you participated in choosing this home? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 35c. If yes, how? ____________________
____

☐ 36. How satisfied are you living in this home?

____ well satisfied
____ partly satisfied
____ so-so
____ dissatisfied

☐ 37a. As you look at it, what do you particularly like about this home? ____________________
____

☐ 37b. As you look at it, what do you particularly dislike about this home? ____________________
____

☐ 38a. Do you have your own room? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 38b. If no, would you prefer to have your own room? Yes ____ No ____ N/A ____.

☐ 38c. How much time do you spend in your room?

____ only to sleep ____ seldom ____ a great deal

☐ 39a. How about the food? Is it o.k.? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 39b. Why? ____________________

☐ 40a. Are there other kids in the home? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 40b. If yes, how many? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

☐ 40c. How do you get along with them?

____ very well ____ average ____ poor

☐ 41a. What are some of the things you like or dislike about your foster father? ____________________
____

☐ 41b. What are some of the things you like or dislike about your foster mother? ____________________
____

☐ 42. What kinds of things do you talk over with your foster parents? ____________________

____

☐ 43a. How would your foster parents deal with you if they didn't approve of what you did? ____________________

____

☐ 43b. How do you react to that?

____ agreement ____ passive acceptance ____ rejection

☐ 44a. Living in your present foster home, have you had any trouble with the law over curfew? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 44b. Any other problems with the law? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 44c. If so, what? ____________________

____

Sometimes if children who live in foster homes visit their families, it seems to make things easier for them, but for some children it seems to make things harder.

☐ 45a. Would you recommend that young people in foster homes have contact with their families? Yes ____ Sometimes ____ No ____.

☐ 45b. Why do you think that? ____________________

____

46. Are your parents living?

☐ 46a. Do you know where your mother is? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 46b. Where is she? ____________________

____ in same city
____ in County
____ in State
____ different state
____ Mexico
____ unknown
____ other (specify) ____________________
____

☐ 46c. How often do you have contact with her?

____ weekly
____ monthly
____ annually
____ less than annually

☐ 43a. How would your foster parents deal with you if they didn't approve of what you did? ____________________

____

☐ 43b. How do you react to that?

____ agreement ____ passive acceptance ____ rejection

☐ 44a. Living in your present foster home, have you had any trouble with the law over curfew? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 44b. Any other problems with the law? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 44c. If so, what? ____________________

____

Sometimes if children who live in foster homes visit their families, it seems to make things easier for them, but for some children it seems to make things harder.

☐ 45a. Would you recommend that young people in foster homes have contact with their families? Yes ____ Sometimes ____ No ____.

☐ 45b. Why do you think that? ____________________

____

46. Are your parents living?

☐ 46a. Do you know where your mother is? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 46b. Where is she? ____________________

____ in same city
____ in County
____ in State
____ different state
____ Mexico
____ unknown
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 46c. How often do you have contact with her?

____ weekly
____ monthly
____ twice yearly
____ annually
____ less than annually
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 46d. Visit ____ Letter ____ Telephone call ____.

☐ 47a. Do you know where your father is? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 47b. Where is he? ____________________

____ in same city
____ in County
____ in State
____ different state
____ Mexico
____ unknown
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 47c. How often do you have contact with him?

____ weekly
____ monthly
____ twice yearly
____ annually
____ less than annually
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 47d. Visit ____ Letter ____ Telephone call ____.

☐ 48. Do you have any brothers or sisters? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 48a. Do you know where they are? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 48b. Where are they?

____ in same city
____ in County
____ in State
____ different state
____ Mexico
____ unknown
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 48c. When did you last have any contact with them?

____ weekly
____ monthly
____ twice yearly
____ annually
____ less than annually
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 48d. Visit ____ Letter ____ Telephone call ____.

☐ 49a. Do your foster parents encourage you to visit your own parents or relatives? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 49b. Have your foster parents tended to welcome your own parents or relatives if they visited? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 50a. How often do you usually see your social worker? ____________

☐ 50b. When was the last time you saw the social worker? ____________

☐ 50c. Was it your idea to see him/her or his/her idea to see you? Yours ____ His ____.

☐ 51. What do you see as the job of the social worker who comes to see you or your foster parents? ______________________

____

____

☐ 52. What has your social worker done to improve or help your situation in foster care? ______________________

____

____

☐ 53. How many social workers have you had? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

☐ 48a. Do you know where they are? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 48b. Where are they?

____ in same city
____ in County
____ in State
____ different state
____ Mexico
____ unknown
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 48c. When did you last have any contact with them?

____ weekly
____ monthly
____ twice yearly
____ annually
____ less than annually
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 48d. Visit ____ Letter ____ Telephone call ____.

☐ 49a. Do your foster parents encourage you to visit your own parents or relatives? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 49b. Have your foster parents tended to welcome your own parents or relatives if they visited? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 50a. How often do you usually see your social worker? ____________

☐ 50b. When was the last time you saw the social worker? ____________

☐ 50c. Was it your idea to see him/her or his/her idea to see you? Yours ____ His ____.

☐ 51. What do you see as the job of the social worker who comes to see you or your foster parents? ____________________
____
____

☐ 52. What has your social worker done to improve or help your situation in foster care? ____________________
____
____

☐ 53. How many social workers have you had? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

☐ 54a. Which was the one you liked best? ____________

☐ 54b. Why? ______________________________
____

VI. FUTURE OUT OF HOME CARE AND ADULT LIVING PLANS

0. Explain "living on own"; describe different possibilities for independent living arrangements.

☐ 55. Thinking about kids your age living away from their own home, what do you think would be the best living arrangements for them? ____________________
____
____

☐ 56a. Would you particularly like living in a "group foster home" with other boys (girls) around your age? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 56b. Why? ____

____

☐ 57a. Could you live on your own? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 57b. Why do you think that? ____

____

☐ 58. If you were to live on your own, what type of living arrangements would be best for you? ____

____

☐ 59a. Living on your own, how much money do you think you'd need a month? Total __________.

____ $100 - 150
____ 151 - 200
____ 201 - 250
____ 251 - 300
____ $301 - 350
____ 351 - 400
____ 401+
____ Uncertain

☐ 59b. Of this amount, how much would go for:

____ food
____ rent
____ recreation
____ transportation
____ clothing
____ other

Revised Total _____

☐ 60. What experience have you had handling money? ____

____

☐ 61a. If you were living on your own, you would have a great many responsibilities. Which do you think would be the most difficult things to do?

____ Keeping your place clean
____ Taking care of your laundry
____ Keeping your clothes mended
____ Getting your meals
____ Getting enough sleep
____ Getting yourself up in the morning
____ Making necessary repairs around your place
____ Paying your bills
____ Trouble with friends coming around
____ Other (specify) ____

☐ 61b. How about these specifics:

____

☐ 57a. Could you live on your own? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 57b. Why do you think that? ______________________________

____

☐ 58. If you were to live on your own, what type of living arrangements would be best for you? ____________________

____

☐ 59a. Living on your own, how much money do you think you'd need a month? Total __________.

____ $100 - 150
____ 151 - 200
____ 201 - 250
____ 251 - 300
____ $301 - 350
____ 351 - 400
____ 401+
____ Uncertain

☐ 59b. Of this amount, how much would go for:

____ food
____ rent
____ recreation
____ transportation
____ clothing
____ other

Revised Total _____

☐ 60. What experience have you had handling money? ______________

____

☐ 61a. If you were living on your own, you would have a great many responsibilities. Which do you think would be the most difficult things to do?

____ Keeping your place clean
____ Taking care of your laundry
____ Keeping your clothes mended
____ Getting your meals
____ Getting enough sleep
____ Getting yourself up in the morning
____ Making necessary repairs around your place
____ Paying your bills
____ Trouble with friends coming around
____ Other (specify) ______________________________

☐ 61b. How about these specifics:

____ Keeping you place clean
____ Taking care of your laundry
____ Keeping your clothes mended
____ Getting your meals
____ Getting enough sleep
____ Getting yourself up in the morning
____ Making necessary repairs around your place
____ Paying your bills
____ Trouble with friends coming around
____ Other (specify) ______________________________

☐ 61c. Now, which of these would be the biggest problem? ________

____

____ Keeping your place clean
____ Taking care of laundry
____ Keeping clothes mended
____ Getting your meals
____ Getting enough sleep
____ Getting self up in a.m.
____ Making necessary repairs
____ Paying your bills
____ Trouble with friends
____ Other (specify) ________

____

☐ 62. If you were living alone and got in trouble, who would you call to help you out? ____________________

____ Natural parent
____ Relative
____ Foster parent
____ Social worker
____ Friend
____ Sibling
____ Other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 63a. Now let's look ahead in your future, do you expect to marry? Yes ____ No ____: Next 5 years ____, 10 years ____, Later or sometime ____.

☐ 63b1. (Male) After your marriage would you expect or want your wife to work? Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ____.

☐ 63b2. (Female) After your marriage would you expect or want to work? Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ____.

☐ 64a. After you marry, where do you want to live? City ____, Suburbs ____, Country ____.

☐ 64b. Would you prefer to:

____ live in an apartment
____ rent a house
____ Live in a house you were buying
____ live with parents or relatives
____ other (specify) ____________________

☐ 65a. Do you want to have children? Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ___

☐ 65b. If yes, what size family would you like?

____ small family ____ large family ____ not sure.

VII. EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

0. Now we want to talk about school, o.k.?

☐ 66a. What grade were you in in 1968-69?

____ Below 9th
____ 9th
____ 10th
____ 11th
____ 12th
____ 13th
____ 14th
____ 15th
____ Not in school

☐ 66b. What are the things you like and/or dislike about school?

____

____

☐ 67. How well do you do in school compared to others in your

____ Natural parent
____ Relative
____ Foster parent
____ Social worker
____ Friend
____ Sibling
____ Other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 63a. Now let's look ahead in your future, do you expect to marry? Yes ____ No ____: Next 5 years ____, 10 years ____, Later or sometime ____.

☐ 63b1. (Male) After your marriage would you expect or want your wife to work? Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ____.

☐ 63b2. (Female) After your marriage would you expect or want to work? Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ____.

☐ 64a. After you marry, where do you want to live? City ____, Suburbs ____, Country ____.

☐ 64b. Would you prefer to:

____ live in an apartment
____ rent a house
____ Live in a house you were buying
____ live with parents or relatives
____ other (specify) ______________________

☐ 65a. Do you want to have children? Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ___

☐ 65b. If yes, what size family would you like?

____ small family ____ large family ____ not sure.

VII. EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

0. Now we want to talk about school, o.k.?

☐ 66a. What grade were you in in 1968-69?

____ Below 9th
____ 9th
____ 10th
____ 11th
____ 12th
____ 13th
____ 14th
____ 15th
____ Not in school

☐ 66b. What are the things you like and/or dislike about school?

____

____

☐ 67. How well do you do in school compared to others in your classes?

____ Above average ____ Average ____ Below average

☐ 68. How hard to you think you work in school compared to other students in your class? ____ Above average ____ Average ____ Below average.

☐ 69. Doing well in school depends on many things. What things do people have to do in order to do well in their classes?

____

____

☐ 70a. How good a reader do you think you are compared with others your age? Above average ____, Average ____, Below av. ____.

☐ 70b. How much do you like reading? A lot ____, Probably av. ____, Little ____, Hate it ____.

☐ 71. How many elementary schools have you gone to? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐ 72. How many schools have you gone to since grade 7? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐ 73. Were you ever held back a grade in school? If so, what school year? (   ). ____ Held back ____ No.

☐ 74. Do you plan to finish high school? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 75. Is there anything that might keep you from graduating? ____

____

☐ 76. If you decide to leave, could anything influence you to stay? What? ____________________________________

____

☐ 77a. Do you think you'd like to continue your education after high school? Yes ____, No ____, Uncertain ____.

☐ 77b. If so, what type of education? ____________________

____

VIII. VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

O. Now, let's talk about employment and jobs.

☐ 78a. Do you want to work this summer? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 78b. Do you have a job for this summer? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 78c. If yes, what is the type or kind of job you have (hope for)?

____

____

☐ 79. In terms of your future right after leaving high school, what do you want to do:

____ Get a job (specify) ____________________
____ Get vocational or apprenticeship training (specify) ____
____
____ Get further educational training (specify) ____________
____

☐ 71. How many elementary schools have you gone to? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐ 72. How many schools have you gone to since grade 7? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐ 73. Were you ever held back a grade in school? If so, what school year? (   ). ____ Held back ____ No.

☐ 74. Do you plan to finish high school? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 75. Is there anything that might keep you from graduating? ____

____

☐ 76. If you decide to leave, could anything influence you to stay? What? ________________________________

____

☐ 77a. Do you think you'd like to continue your education after high school? Yes ____, No ____, Uncertain ____.

☐ 77b. If so, what type of education? ____________________

____

VIII. VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

0. Now, let's talk about employment and jobs.

☐ 78a. Do you want to work this summer? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 78b. Do you have a job for this summer? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 78c. If yes, what is the type or kind of job you have (hope for)?

____

____

☐ 79. In terms of your future right after leaving high school, what do you want to do:

____ Get a job (specify) ____________________
____ Get vocational or apprenticeship training (specify) ____
____
____ Get further educational training (specify) __________
____
____ Get married and be a housewife
____ Do something else (specify including working while going to school) ____________________

☐ 80. Why did you decide that you wanted to do this? __________

____

☐ 81a. Have you taken any vocational aptitude tests or other tests regarding your abilities? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 81b. If yes, did your school counselor discuss the results with you? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 81c. In respect to these tests, would you like to take:

____ some
____ more
____ none

☐ 82. Who have you talked to regarding your plans? (If frequent, mark F).

____ no one
____ foster parents
____ teacher
____ school counselor
____ social worker
____ parents or relatives
____ employers
____ priest or minister
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 83. Of these persons or others, who do you think would be most helpful to you in achieving what you want to do? __________

____ no one
____ foster parents
____ teacher
____ school counselor
____ social worker
____ parents or relatives
____ employers
____ priest or minister
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 84a. What might stand in the way of achieving your job or training plans? ______________________________

☐ 84b. Do you believe that race or religion will be a factor? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 84c. Do you think there are any physical or health factors that will affect your job or training plans? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 84d. If yes, what are they? ______________________________
____

☐ 85. In thinking about work, what are some of the more important things to you in a job: (Number in order of importance)

____ security of steady work
____ opportunity for a rapid rise
____ enjoyment of the work itself
____ friendly people to work with
____ high income
____ the kind of supervisor, boss

☐ 86a. What do you plan to do about military service?

____ enlist after high school
____ go after college
____ don't know
____ N/A
____ wait until drafted
____ get a deferment for reasons other than education

____ no one
____ foster parents
____ teacher
____ school counselor
____ social worker

____ parents or relatives
____ employers
____ priest or minister
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 83. Of these persons or others, who do you think would be most helpful to you in achieving what you want to do? __________

____ no one
____ foster parents
____ teacher
____ school counselor
____ social worker

____ parents or relatives
____ employers
____ priest or minister
____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 84a. What might stand in the way of achieving your job or training plans? ______________________________

☐ 84b. Do you believe that race or religion will be a factor?
Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 84c. Do you think there are any physical or health factors that will affect your job or training plans? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____.

☐ 84d. If yes, what are they? ______________________________
____

☐ 85. In thinking about work, what are some of the more important things to you in a job: (Number in order of importance)

____ security of steady work
____ opportunity for a rapid rise
____ enjoyment of the work itself
____ friendly people to work with
____ high income
____ the kind of supervisor, boss

☐ 86a. What do you plan to do about military service?

____ enlist after high school
____ go after college
____ don't know
____ N/A

____ wait until drafted
____ get a deferment for reasons other than education

☐ 86b. Attitude seems to be:

____ positive ____ negative ____ indifferent

IX. Thinking back about some of the things we've talked about (enumerate section headings), is there anything you'd like to add?

X. Can you think of any things that can be done to improve the foster home program?

POST-INTERVIEW INFORMATION

The following questions are to be answered by the interviewer immediately after each interview.

☐ 1. Youth's degree of cooperation

____ excellent
____ good
____ fair
____ poor

☐ 2. Rate youth's general appearance - physical appearance, grooming, dress.

____ excellent (unusually good)
____ good
____ fair
____ poor

☐ 3. Rate youth's complexion

____ good
____ fair
____ poor (severe skin problem)

☐ 4. Rate youth's overall physical maturity for age - boys - degree of voice change, heaviness of beard, body development - girls - physical development

____ quite physically mature
____ average physical maturity
____ physically immature

5. Note any unusual problem in this interview. ____________________

____

____

☐ 6. Did the youth show any sign of embarrassment at any time during the interview? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 7. Did he/she show any humor - like joking or smiling? Yes ____ No ____

☐ 8. Did he/she look directly at you most of the time? Yes ____, No ____, or look away Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 9. How would you rate his/her self-confidence?

____ excellent
____ good
____ fair
____ poor

☐ 10. Were his/her answers -

____ clear and concise
clear but rambling

☐ 1. Youth's degree of cooperation

____ excellent
____ good
____ fair
____ poor

☐ 2. Rate youth's general appearance - physical appearance, grooming, dress.

____ excellent (unusually good)
____ good
____ fair
____ poor

☐ 3. Rate youth's complexion

____ good
____ fair
____ poor (severe skin problem)

☐ 4. Rate youth's overall physical maturity for age - boys - degree of voice change, heaviness of beard, body development - girls - physical development

____ quite physically mature
____ average physical maturity
____ physically immature

5. Note any unusual problem in this interview. ____________________

____

____

☐ 6. Did the youth show any sign of embarrassment at any time during the interview? Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 7. Did he/she show any humor - like joking or smiling? Yes ____ No ____

☐ 8. Did he/she look directly at you most of the time? Yes ____, No ____, or look away Yes ____ No ____.

☐ 9. How would you rate his/her self-confidence?

____ excellent
____ good
____ fair
____ poor

☐ 10. Were his/her answers -

____ clear and concise
____ clear but rambling
____ somewhat unorganized
____ other (specify) ____________
____

11. Thumbnail sketch - any unusual characteristics or physical condition, looks, general qualities, reference to the interview and interviewer, etc. ____________________

____

____

12. Recommendations for follow-up actions ____________________

____

13. What kind of prediction would you make as to this youth's future out of home care adjustment? ____________________

____

ED053393

AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF 47 FOSTER PARENTS PROVIDING OUT-OF-HOME CARE FOR YOUTH

Project 410: Study Report #3

San Diego County
Department of Public Welfare

July, 1969

CG 006 378

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August 26, 1969

TO: AVIS RANA, DIVISION CHIEF
SPECIAL PROGRAMS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

FROM: DAVID C. PRITCHARD, PROJECT SUPERVISOR
PROJECT #410, STUDY REPORT NO. 3

The third report of a series of research studies under Project #410 is hereby transmitted. This report is entitled: An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Perceptions of 47 Sets of Foster Parents Providing Out-of-Home Care for Youth. It provides general statistical information describing the foster parents and their attitudes concerning youth placed in their homes.

A pilot study was conducted with a small number of parents in July. Generally the interviews were conducted by Judith Marquette, Phyllis Boyles, and Elizabeth Mitchum of the Project #410 staff. Department Research Analyst, Ollie James, provided consultation and technical assistance. The collected data was analyzed and reported by J. McEwan Macintyre, special consultant for research. Professor Norris E. Class, School of Social Work, the University of Southern California, Project Consultant, participated in the planning and development of the study. Secretary support was provided by Pearlie Foster.

The cooperation of the district offices in preparing the way for the interviews to be conducted is appreciated.

Appreciation is expressed to the foster parents who were willing to be interviewed for this study.

DCP:jd

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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the third segment of a study regarding certain older adolescents receiving out-of-home care under the auspices of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (AFDC) in San Diego County, California. Forty-seven foster parents, or sets of foster parents, were interviewed. Of these, 7 are single-parent homes. In 63 percent of the cases where there is both a foster mother and a foster father, both foster parents were seen. In 37 percent of the homes where there are two foster parents, only the foster mother was interviewed.

The interviews were conducted during July 1969 by two project staff members. In every case a different staff member interviewed the foster parent(s) than had earlier interviewed the youth placed in the home. In all cases the interviews were conducted in the foster homes.

The results of the interviews with the 47 sets of foster parents are presented within the following areas: socio-economic data regarding the foster parents, their background as foster parents, their perceptions of foster parenting in relation to the youth currently in the home, educational and vocational goals for the youth, foster parents' relationship to the agency, and their critique of the foster home program for youth.

No attempt has been made in this report to correlate the answers given by the foster parents with those given by the youth (reported in Study Report #2) or with material in the case record (subject of Study Report #1); such correlations may be the subject of a later Report.

I. Circumstances of Foster Parents

A. Socio-economic Data Regarding the Foster Parents

Most of the foster parents that were interviewed were Caucasian--34, (73 percent), 7 (15 percent) were Negro and 3 (6 percent) Mexican-American, another 3 (6 percent) were of another racial background.

Forty of the homes (85 percent) had two parents present; 7 homes (15 percent) had no father present. The foster fathers tended to be older than their wives. The median age for foster fathers is between 51 and 60; the median age for foster mothers, between the ages of 41 and 50. Foster parents tend to have been married for a considerable length of time, 26 for over 21 years (55 percent); however, 3 (6 percent) had been married previously than the foster fathers. Twenty-one (45 percent) of the foster mothers have had previous marriages, 16 (34 percent) of the foster fathers have, also. Although none of the foster mothers had been raised in foster homes, 3 of their husbands had.

The median number of their own children that the foster parents have is 3. The median number of own children in the home, at present, is one. Although 4 of the couples never had children of their own, at this time 21 (45 percent) have none of their own children at home.

Twenty-one (45 percent) of the parents have other foster children in their homes as well as the youth who is the particular concern of this study.

Fifteen of the foster mothers (32 percent) work outside the home.

The homes that the youth presently live in are most often private, single-family dwellings; only 2 of the youth (4 percent) do not live in such accommodation. The median number of bedrooms in the homes is 3. Of those responding, 37 (79 percent) of the foster parents are buying or have already bought their homes; 9 families (19 percent) live in rented accommodation.

The median family income is between $7,000 and $9,000 annually.

In general, the foster mothers have completed more formal schooling than have their husbands. The median grade attained by the foster mothers is grade 12; the foster fathers have a median scholastic standing between grades 10 and 12. Twenty foster fathers (43 percent) are reported as having taken special employment training courses: 11 (23 percent) of the total group have taken courses to increase their mechanical skills or abilities. Other courses that have been taken include electronics, food handling, and law enforcement. Nineteen foster mothers have taken employment training courses. Business and clerical skill development were the most frequently taken courses: 4 foster mothers have taken training in aspects of nursing care.

B. Background as Foster Parents

Twenty-six (55 percent) of the homes in which youth currently stay have been licensed as boarding homes by the County Department of Welfare. Fourteen of the homes (30 percent) are currently licensed. The licensing regulations at this time cover foster homes that care for children until their sixteenth birthday; licenses are not required for homes in which older youth are placed. The median length of time that those homes which have been licensed have taken foster children is 4 years. The median number of foster children that has been placed in those 4 years is 2.

Many of the foster homes have been utilized by other agencies. Twenty-one homes (45 percent) have been utilized by the County Probation Office, 5 (11 percent) have been used by the Adoption Section of the Department, and 6 (13 percent) have been used to place children from more than one of these agencies.

The most usual way that the foster parents began taking children into their homes was to be asked by a friend or relative; 11 (23 percent) started in this way. Nine (19 percent) knew the youth or his family as friends or neighbors, and 7 (15 percent) of the youth were known to need homes by children already in the home. Only 4 (9 percent) of the foster parents felt they had been recruited by the Department of Public Welfare.

All of the foster parents felt that their own children in the home generally accepted the foster children and that there were no serious problems in this regard.

Most of the foster parents think that it is a good idea for the youth's own family to maintain contact with him. Twenty-two foster parents (47 percent) feel it valuable for such contact to continue, 17 (36 percent) feel the value depends on the situation. Two foster parents feel such contacts should not be allowed as they tend to upset the youth.

Thirty-three foster parents (70 percent) believed the mother of the youth in their homes to be alive, only 1 foster parent did not know if the youth's mother was alive or not. Twelve of the foster parents (26 percent) stated that they did not know if the youth's father was alive. More mothers are reported as keeping in touch with their youth in foster homes than fathers.

Most of the foster parents believe that the youth receiving out-of-home care in their home is unable to live with his own parents due to their inability to care adequately for him: 24 (51 percent) gave this as the reason.

II. Current Experiences as Foster Parents

A. Foster parenting with Youth Currently in the Home

The median length of time that the youth in the study have been in their present foster home, according to the foster parents, is between one and two years. Thirteen youth (28 percent) have been in their present home for less than one year; 16 youth (34 percent) have been in their present home for 5 years or more.

The foster parents generally feel that they had a part to play in the decision-making process with regard to the youth moving into their home. Thirty-three (70 percent) of the youth visited in the home before placement. As neighbors, some of the youth were in and out of their present home frequently before formally moving in with the family. Some youth visited in the home with the social worker present before the final decision was made.

Forty-five of the youths' foster parents (96 percent) see the youth as being happy with them; only 2 (4 percent) feel the youth to be unhappy with them.

Some of the good points that their foster parents recognize in the youth are: ambition, determination, disposition, thoughtfulness, helpfulness, and friendly manner. Some of the negative aspects mentioned are: moodiness, irritability, argumentativeness, and unpredictable behavior.

Some of the satisfying things that the foster parents identified as present in being foster parents are: noting the progress that a child or youth makes when given the opportunity to develop, feeling that they have helped someone who needed them, and seeing the young person become more happy and relaxed about life.

The most often identified negative aspect of being foster parent to youth is the tendency of the young to not wish to learn from adults, to have their own methods of doing things and not wish to be told.

When the foster parents need to discipline the youth, the most usual method utilized is to discuss the matter with him: restrictions of privileges are used to a somewhat lesser extent. In most cases the youth are seen as accepting the discipline of their foster parents.

Most of the youth are involved in some of the chores in their present foster home. Being responsible for their own rooms and helping with the general housework are the most common expectations the foster parents have for the youth.

Most (81 percent) of the youth were seen by their foster parents as having adequate funds for their needs; some, however, did talk of wishing additional funds for specific needs such as clothing or transportation. Twenty-three (49 percent) foster parents felt it advisable for the youth to receive an allowance paid directly to them from the Welfare Department. Sixteen foster parents (34 percent) felt such an allowance would not be in the youth's best interests; 8 foster parents (17 percent) either had no opinion on the matter or were not sure if such an allowance would benefit the youth or not. Personal needs such as cosmetics, cigarettes, snacks, and recreational needs were seen as being those for which the youth needed additional funds. Funds for additional clothing was seen as needed by 20 foster parents (43 percent).

Thirty-three youth (70 percent) are seen by their foster parents as being above average with regard to their health, 12 (26 percent) are seen as being of average health, 2 (4 percent) are felt to be in poor general health.

Most of the youth, 33 (70 percent) bring friends to their foster homes, but 14 (30 percent) bring friends home only rarely or never. Most foster parents believe the youth in their homes prefer to spend time with one or two friends, 24 (51 percent); some prefer to spend time with a group of friends, 10 (21 percent) and 9 prefer to be alone (19 percent). The median number of evenings per week that the youth are reported to spend away from their foster homes, usually out with friends, is 2. The majority of the youth are seen by their foster parents as getting along rather well with their friends, 38 (81 percent), but 9 foster parents were unsure or felt the youth in their home did not get along too well with his peers (19 percent).

When asked to compare the youth receiving out-of-home care in their home with other youth regarding his feelings about himself, 32 foster parents (68 percent) felt their particular youth seemed really quite sure of himself. Fifteen foster parents, however, (32 percent) felt the youth was not as sure of himself as others his age. More foster parents see their youth as being happy than unhappy; only 3 foster parents (6 percent) gave their youth a rating of unhappy.

The foster parents were asked their opinions with regard to certain substances. Barbiturates and LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) were seen as harmful by all the foster parents. Smoking was seen as harmful by all but one foster parent; marijuana was not considered harmful by two foster parents. Drinking alcoholic liquors was seen as harmful by 34 of the foster parents (72 percent); 13 considered them not harmful (28 percent).

Thirty-one of the foster parents (66 percent) stated the belief that when older teen-agers get into trouble (become delinquent) it is generally a result of their doing what everyone else is doing. Eight foster parents (17 percent) feel delinquent acts result from the youth knowing it is wrong, but not caring; the remainder feel delinquent acts result from the youth not knowing any better or temptation.

B. Educational and Vocational Goals for the Youth

When asked to rate the youth's ability in school with others the same age, most foster parents, 28 (60 percent), felt he was doing "average"; ten foster parents (21 percent) felt the youth was doing below average work, 8 (17 percent), above average. Forty-one of the youth (87 percent) have either already finished high school or are very certain to finish; 6 youth (13 percent) may not complete their high school courses. Most foster parents appear to encourage the youths to get as much education as possible for them; they appreciate the importance of the youth making the most of his ability and the present demands of the labor market. Many foster parents, 32 (68 percent) have visited the youth's high school and talked about his progress with a teacher or counselor.

Many of the youth wish to enter vocations that demand training or education beyond high school. Teaching, nursing, social work are reported as the career choice of 16 of the youth (34 percent); 7 youth (15 percent) hope to become skilled tradesmen and 7 (15 percent) hope to do some type of office work. None of the youth are reported interested in law, medicine or the ministry. Only one foster parent did not know the aspirations of the youth in the home and only 4 youth were reported to have no vocational plans to date.

The foster parents generally agree with the vocational choices of the youth: 38 (81 percent) do agree with them. The most usual reason for agreement is that the foster parent believes the youth has the skill or temperament necessary for the vocation. Part of the agreement, however, might be traced to the fact that the decision was made following discussions with the foster parents. Thirty-nine of the foster mothers (83 percent) state that they have discussed vocational choices with the youth; 20 foster fathers (43 percent) are reported to have had similar discussions with the youth. The social worker is reported by the foster parents to have talked about possible vocational choices with 11 of the youth (23 percent).

C. Out-of-Home Care for Youth

Most of the foster parents, 37 (79 percent) feel that foster homes are the best resource for youth needing out-of-home care. Six foster parents (13 percent) said they felt group homes would be best for youth. When asked specifically about the youth in their home and group home living, 28 (60 percent) felt the youth could not manage adequately in such a facility; 13 (28 percent) felt the youth could manage in a group home, 6 foster parents were not sure the if the youth could manage or not. The main reasons for foster parents thinking the youth could not manage in a group home is their assessment of the youth as needing more individual attention that he could receive, or that he was still rather dependent on parent-figures.

The foster parents were asked to assess the youth's readiness to live on his own, independently of a family. Almost as many felt the youth could not manage on his own as felt he could. Of those responding, 22 (48 percent) of the foster parents felt the youth could not manage, 23 (52 percent) felt the youth could manage on his own.

The main responsibilities that the foster parents predicted might cause the youth trouble if living alone were taking care of the laundry, getting enough sleep and paying bills and budgeting. Nineteen was the median age that the foster parents believed the youth could be expected to be on his own. Before he could manage independently, the foster parents felt the youth would usually have to learn more about money management, increase his personal maturity, and have greater opportunities to learn to fend for himself.

D. Foster Parents' Relationship to Agency

Twenty-five of the foster parents (53 percent) state that the social worker visits them in their homes at least once each month. The other 22 foster parents (47 percent) are seen less often. In many instances the social worker talks with both the foster child and the foster parents, however, 22 of the foster parents state that the worker tends to see only the foster child. In 16 instances (34 percent) it is the foster parents that the worker talks with. The focus of the workers' activity depends on the needs of the individuals involved and the time the worker has available.

Thirty-three (70 percent) of the foster fathers have been interviewed at least once by the social workers, 9 (19 percent) have not; this last number includes the homes where there is no foster father. Although the foster fathers are not seen by the workers with the same frequency as their wives, most of them have been seen in the last six months on at least one occasion.

The function of the social worker as perceived by the foster parents is to see that the foster child is getting along alright; 28 (60 percent) see this as the worker's primary role. Eight (18 percent) see the role as primarily assisting the youth by providing him with information about resources, to be available when needed, etc. Only 11 foster parents (23 percent) identified the worker as giving assistance to them primarily in their role as foster parent. When asked, specifically, regarding help they had received from the social worker, 15 foster parents (32 percent) said they had received no help of particular significance, primarily because they did not feel the need of it. Other foster parents mentioned appreciating the support and backing of the worker in handling difficulties in the home or for increasing their understanding of the youth to enable them to handle situations more effectively. The majority, 37 (79 percent) of the foster parents could think of no additional ways that the worker could have helped them. Some ways that were mentioned were for the worker to have been more able to provide referrals for the youth, generally more activity, and a worker of the same sex for the youth to identify with.

The characteristic of the social worker liked best by the foster parents mentioned most frequently was "concerned, interested, understanding".

The foster parents were asked if they had any plans for taking other foster children or youth into their homes. The majority, 26 (55 percent) replied that they had no such plans; 11 (23 percent) said that they did wish more, and 8 (17 percent) were uncertain. Thirty-one (66 percent) of the foster parents said that they could not take any additional foster children into their homes at this time. Fourteen (30 percent felt that they could take additional foster children or youth at this time.

E. Critique of Foster Home Program

The foster parents were asked both specific and general questions regarding aspects of foster home care. Their concerns dealt predominantly with ways of improving the pre-placement activities, and continuing contacts with the Department while the youth is in their home. Specific questions were asked regarding the adequacy of the boarding home rate and interest in a training or educational program for foster parents.

The most commonly expressed wish with regard to pre-placement stated by the foster parents was for more adequate information regarding the child or youth. The foster parents wish to be informed of past difficulties and possible present trouble to a greater extent in most cases. They feel that greater effort should be made to match the young person with the foster family, and that homes should not be over-burdened with additional placements.

Improvements in continiing contact between the Department and the individual foster home were seen to include more frequent visits by the social worker to the home, more frequent discussions of the special emotional and social needs of the adolescent and the need for more emphasis on money management in the youth contacts with their social workers.

Higher foster home rates were felt necessary by 35 of the foster parents visited (74 percent). Most spoke of wishing an increase between $25 and $50 per month; this would bring the rate to $130-$155. Although some foster parents felt the additional need of adolescents was the main reason for wishing an increase in the rate paid, the more general reason given was the ever-increasing cost-of-living.

The foster parents were asked directly about their interest in a training program regarding foster parenting. Most saw value in such a program both to orient new foster parents to their additional responsibilities and to assist with their understanding of the young persons in their homes. Thirty-two foster parents (68 percent) stated an interest in such a group training program.

III. Summary

The foster parents responsible for the out-of-home care being provided for the 51 youth in the study are predominantly Caucasian. In most of the homes there are two parents present.

The foster fathers tend to be a little older than their wives, in their fifties; their wives are in their forties. Many of them have raised families of their own. Their children now generally are out of the home and established as young adults.

Almost one-half the foster homes have other foster children in addition to the youth that is the focus of this study.

Most of the foster parents began taking foster children as the result of a personal approach by a friend, relative or neighbor, rather than being formally recruited by an agency.

Almost one-third of the foster mothers work outside the home. The median family income is between $7,000 and $9,000 annually. Most of the homes are private, single-family units that are being purchased by the foster parents.

Most of the foster parents have completed high school. In addition, many have enrolled in special employment training courses.

Over one-half the foster homes have been licensed earlier, but less than one-third of the homes are currently licensed. The foster homes are used by other agencies than the Welfare Department, and most of the homes have had two foster children in them in the four years that they have taken foster children and youth. Other children in the home are reported to be accepting of the foster children.

Most of the youth have been in their present foster home between one and two years. The foster parents report they felt a part of the process that determined the youth would come to live with them. The youth are generally reported as being happy with their present home and foster parents.

The youth are generally seen as healthy, happy young people who get along well with others their own age. They are seen by their foster parents as being suitably oriented to school and future vocations. Rather than being ready to live on their own, those under 19 are most often seen as continuing to need family-type care.

The foster parents appear quite satisfied with their relationship with the Department and its social workers, but do have suggestions to make with regard to recruitment, the decision-making process regarding placement, and continuing contact with the Department.

Certain items that were identified in the interviews with the foster parents have special relevance for future planning by the Department:

1. The foster parents of the youth in this study are generally experienced in caring for children and youth. Although only one "own" child remains in the foster home, the median number of "own" children is three. In most instances, the foster parents have had one other foster child than the youth. This experience would seem to give parents confidence in their ability and they tend to perceive themselves as being able to manage with little help from the Department.

2. The age of the foster parents may tend to make it unlikely that they will again become involved in long-term foster care. Age may be a contributing factor to the majority of foster parents stating that they will not likely take additional foster children or youth.

3. The foster parents in this study appear to be relatively secure financially and socially. The median family income is sufficient to enable them to live comfortably and to work toward home ownership.

4. One-third of the foster mothers are employed outside the home. This additional family income generally adds to the security of the home and makes for naturalness of the work ethic as presented to the young persons in the home.

5. With regard to recruitment, many foster parents report that rather than being formally recruited by an agency social worker, they began caring for youth that they knew or who were known to friends or neighbors. Asking the youth in need of out-of-home care for names of families or individuals they might like to live with, would seem, as far as this age group is concerned, to be an effective way of finding homes.

6. The foster parents do feel a part of the decision-making process that led to the youth moving into their home. Some do request, however, that additional information be given them with regard to the youth's present behavior patterns prior to his moving into the home.

7. Many of the foster parents appreciate that the youth need to have additional experience with regard to budgeting. They see experience as being the best teacher and see value in the youth having an allowance adequate to enable the youth to learn how to best utilize the money available to him.

8. The foster parents appear to see one of their functions to become involved in assisting the youth with regard to his decisions concerning school and vocational choices. They tend to project on to the youth their own educational and vocational values. A large percentage of the foster parents have visited schools and had discussions with school personnel regarding the youth's progress and future aspirations.

9. The foster parents tend to see the youth as being too immature psychologically with a continuing need to be dependent on them as parent figures to be able to move away from family-type care to more independent living.

10. The findings from this study, while not indicating unrest, did show evidence of the feeling that foster home rates should be increased. A variety of reasons were given for this including the increase in the cost of living and the foster parents' wish to do additional things for the youth.

11. The foster parents indicate that they are interest in some type of on-going training program geared to their concerns in working with adolescents. They voiced an interest in increasing their knowledge regarding the normal development of the adolescent to add to their understanding of the youth.

FOSTER PARENT SCHEDULE

PROJECT 410 - NEEDS OF OLDER CHILDREN LIVING AWAY FROM HOME

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Youth Study Number ______________

Youth Name ___________________________ Social Survey No. _____________

Foster Father Name _________________ Foster Mother Name ________________

Address ________________________________ Telephone No. __________________

Social Worker Name _______________________ District No. ____________

Interviewed by _____________________________

Date ___________ Time Began ________ End ________ Approx. Length _______

Place of Interview ____

Private ___________________________ Others Present ______________________

Note any special circumstances ____

____

A

FOSTER PARENT SCHEDULE
SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

☐ 1. Type of work foster father engaged in: ____________________

1____ mining
2____ construction
3____ manufacturing
4____ transportation and public
5____ wholesale and retail trade
6____ finance, insurance, real estate
7____ service
8____ government
9____ other (specify) __________
____
0____ doesn't work (specify reason) __________
____
X____ No foster father
Y____ military

☐ 2a. Does foster mother work outside the home? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 2b. If yes, type of work: ____________________

1____ mining
2____ construction
3____ manufacturing
4____ transportation and public utilities
5____ wholesale and retail trade
6____ finance, insurance, real estate
7____ service
8____ government
9____ other (specify) __________
____
0____ no work outside of home

☐ 3. Number of own children: (His, hers, theirs)

0 none 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 or more

☐ 4a. Number of own children in the home at present:

0 none 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 or more

☐ 4b. Ages of own children at home:

youngest
0____ none
1____ under 10
2____ 11-20
3____ 21-30
4____ 31 or older

☐ 4c.

oldest
0____ none
1____ under 10
2____ 11-20
3____ 21-30
4____ 31 or older

☐ 5a. Any other foster children in the home? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 5b. How many?

☐ 6a. Age of foster father: __________

1____ under 20
2____ 21-30
3____ 31-40
4____ 41-50
5____ 51-60
6____ 61-70
7____ 71 and over
0____ No foster father in home
X____ No response

☐ 6b. Age of foster mother:

2____ construction
3____ manufacturing
4____ transportation and public
5____ wholesale and retail trade
6____ finance, insurance, real estate
7____ service

9____ other (specify) ____________
____
0____ doesn't work (specify reason) ____________
____
X____ No foster father
Y____ military

☐ 2a. Does foster mother work outside the home? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 2b. If yes, type of work: ______________________

1____ mining
2____ construction
3____ manufacturing
4____ transportation and public utilities
5____ wholesale and retail trade

6____ finance, insurance, real estate
7____ service
8____ government
9____ other (specify) __________
____
0____ no work outside of home

☐ 3. Number of own children: (His, hers, theirs)

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2____ 21-30
3____ 31-40
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5____ 51-60
6____ 61-70
7____ 71 and over
0____ No foster father in home
X____ No response

☐ 6b. Age of foster mother: ____________

1____ under 20
2____ 21-30
3____ 31-40
4____ 41-50

5____ 51-60
6____ 61-70
7____ 71 and over
0____ No foster mother in home
X____ No response

Col. ____

☐ 7. How long have foster parents been married? ____________

1____ less than 1 year
2____ 1-5 years
3____ 6-10 years
4____ 11-15 years
5____ 16-20 years
6____ over 21 years
7____ N/A

☐ 8. Previous marriages?

a. Foster mother
1____ Yes
2____ No

b. Foster father
3____ Yes
4____ No

☐ 9a. Foster mother raised by:

1____ own parents
2____ one own parent and one step-parent
3____ foster parents
4____ relatives (specify) ________
5____ adopted
6____ other (specify) ________

☐ 9b. Foster father raised by:

1____ own parents
2____ one own parent and one step-parent
3____ foster parents
4____ relatives (specify) ________
5____ adopted
6____ other (specify) ________

☐ 10. Type of residence:

1____ private home
2____ apartment
3____ trailer
4____ other (specify) ________

☐ 11. Is your home:

1____ rented
2____ owned or buying
3____ other (specify) ________

☐ 12. Number of bedrooms: 1 2 3 4 5 or more

☐ 13. Last grade foster father completed in school:

0____ no schooling
1____ grades 1-6
2____ grades 7-9
3____ grades 10-12
4____ high school diploma
5____ university 1 2 3 4
6____ graduated from university
7____ other (specify) ________

☐ 14a. Any special employment training courses? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 14b. What kind? ____________________

☐ 15. Last grade foster mother completed in school:

0____ no schooling
5____ university 1 2 3 4

3____ 6-10 years
4____ 11-15 years

7____ N/A

☐ 8. Previous marriages?

a. Foster mother
1____ Yes
2____ No

b. Foster father
3____ Yes
4____ No

☐ 9a. Foster mother raised by:

1____ own parents
2____ one own parent and one step-parent
3____ foster parents
4____ relatives (specify) ________
____
5____ adopted
6____ other (specify) __________
____

☐ 9b. Foster father raised by:

1____ own parents
2____ one own parent and one step-parent
3____ foster parents
4____ relatives (specify) ________
____
5____ adopted
6____ other (specify) __________
____

☐ 10. Type of residence:

1____ private home
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4____ high school diploma
5____ university 1 2 3 4
6____ graduated from university
7____ other (specify) __________
____

☐ 14a. Any special employment training courses? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 14b. What kind? ______________________________

☐ 15. Last grade foster mother completed in school:

0____ no schooling
1____ grades 1-6
2____ grades 7-9
3____ grades 10-12
4____ high school diploma
5____ university 1 2 3 4
6____ graduated from university
7____ other (specify) __________
____

☐ 15a. Any special employment training courses? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 15b. What kind? ______________________________

Col. ____

☐ 16. Approximate family income:

1____ under $3,000
2____ $3,000 - 4,999
3____ $5,000 - 6,999
4____ $ 7,000 - 8,999
5____ $ 8,000 - 10,999
6____ $11,000 - 12,999
7____ $13,000 +

☐ 17. Ethnic Group:

1____ Negro
2____ Mexican-American
3____ Caucasian
4____ other (specify) ____________
____

Col. ____

FOSTER PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

II. BACKGROUND AS FOSTER PARENTS

☐ MFB 1. How long have you been taking foster children?

☐ MFB 2. How many foster kids have you had in your home?

Explain "licensing" briefly.

☐ MFB 3a. Has your home ever been licensed? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 3b. For how long? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 years.

☐ MFB 3c. Still licensed? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) N/A ____.

☐ MFB 4a. Have you worked with any other agency as a foster parent? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 4b. Which one?

☐ MFB 5. How did you get started being a foster parent?

☐ MFB 6. How do your own children feel about having foster kids in the home?

III. FOSTER PARENTING WITH YOUTH CURRENTLY IN HOME

☐ MFB 7. How long has ____________ been with you in your home? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 years.

☐ MFB 8. What were you told were the reasons he/she could no longer live with his own family?

1____ no reason given
2____ inability of relatives to care
3____ parental illness
4____ parental behavior (deprivation of child's needs)
5____ parental behavior (economic needs)
6____ child's own behavior
7____ multiple
8____ illegitimacy
9____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ MFB 2. How many foster kids have you had in your home?

Explain "licensing" briefly.

☐ MFB 3a. Has your home ever been licensed? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 3b. For how long? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 years.

☐ MFB 3c. Still licensed? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) N/A ____.

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3____ parental illness
4____ parental behavior (deprivation of child's needs)
5____ parental behavior (economic needs)
6____ child's own behavior
7____ multiple
8____ illegitimacy
9____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ MFB 9a. Did you feel that you had any part to play in deciding that he/she would be coming to live with you? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____. 3) No opinion ____.

☐ MFB 9b. If yes, in what way?

☐ MFB 9c. Did he/she visit in your home before coming to live with you? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

Col. ____

FOSTER PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

☐ MFB 10a. Are ____________'s own parents living? Mother: 1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) Don't know ____; Father: 4) Yes ____, 5) No ____, 6) Don't know ____.

☐ MFB 10b. Can you tell us about the family contacts _________ has had during the last year?

	Fa	Mo	Both	Siblings	Other Relatives
phone					
letter					
visit to F/H					
visit to own home					
outing					
other					

☐ MFB 11. What do you think about the idea of the foster child's own parents or relatives keeping in touch with him?

☐ MFB 12. Which of the following best describes his/her usual health right now?

1____ excellent
2____ very good
3____ good
4____ average
5____ poor
6____ very poor

☐ MFB 13. How happy would you say ____________ seems to be in staying in your home?

1____ very happy
2____ fairly happy
3____ fairly unhappy
4____ very unhappy
5____ uncertain

☐ MFB 14. Does he/she spend his/her spare time 1) alone ____, 2) with one or two friends ____, 3) with a group of friends ____, 4) other (specify) ____________________________?

☐ MFB 15. Does he/she bring friends home? 1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) very often ____, 4) often ____, 5) rarely ____, 7) multiple ____.

☐ MFB 16. About how many evenings a week does he/she spend out with the other kids? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐ MFB 17. How do you feel he/she gets along with others his/her age?

1____ very well
2____ pretty well
3____ uncertain
4____ quite poorly
5____ very poorly

☐ MFB 18. Compared to his/her friends or other young people about the same age, how would you rate his/her feelings about him/herself?

1____ very sure of self
2____ quite sure of self
3____ not very sure of self
4____ not at all sure of self

☐ MFB 19. Compared to his/her friends or other young people you know about

☐ MFB 10b. Can you tell us about the family contacts ________ has had during the last year?

	Fa	Mo	Both	Siblings	Other Relatives
phone					
letter					
visit to F/H					
visit to own home					
outing					
other					

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☐ MFB 18. Compared to his/her friends or other young people about the same age, how would you rate his/her feelings about him/herself?

1____ very sure of self
2____ quite sure of self
3____ not very sure of self
4____ not at all sure of self

☐ MFB 19. Compared to his/her friends or other young people you know about the same age, how would you rate how happy he/she is?

1____ very happy
2____ quite happy
3____ quite unhappy
4____ very unhappy
5____ hard to tell

☐ MFB 20. What are some of the things that ____________ does well and enjoys doing?

Col. ____

FOSTER PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

(Now let's talk about school and employment.)

☐ MFB 21. How well does he/she do in school or college compared with others in his/her class?

1) above average ____ 2) average ____ 3) below average ____

☐ MFB 22. Does he/she plan to finish high school? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) Uncertain ____, 4) dropped out ____, 5) has completed high school ____.

☐ MFB 23a. Do you believe he/she should continue his/her education after high school? 1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) Uncertain ____, 4) dropped out ____, 5) has completed high school ____.

☐ MFB 23b. Why?

☐ MFB 24a. Have you talked with the people at school about how he/she is doing? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 24b. If yes, who did you talk to at school?

☐ MFB 25. What does ___________ say he/she would like to do in the way of employment?

MFB 26a. Do you think this is a good choice for him/her? 1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) No opinion ____.

☐ MFB 26b. Why?

☐ MFB 27a. Does ____________ talk to anyone about his future plans for things such as education, employment, etc.? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 27b. If yes, who does he/she talk to?

☐ MFB 28. What are some of his/her strong points?

☐ MFB 29. What in his/her behavior bothers you the most?

1) above average ____ 2) average ____ 3) below average ____

☐ MFB 22. Does he/she plan to finish high school? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) Uncertain ____, 4) dropped out ____, 5) has completed high school ____.

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☐ MFB 23b. Why?

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MFB 26a. Do you think this is a good choice for him/her? 1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) No opinion ____.

☐ MFB 26b. Why?

☐ MFB 27a. Does ____________ talk to anyone about his future plans for things such as education, employment, etc.? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 27b. If yes, who does he/she talk to?

☐ MFB 28. What are some of his/her strong points?

☐ MFB 29. What in his/her behavior bothers you the most?

☐ MFB 30. How do you deal with this behavior?

☐ MFB 31. How does he/she react to this?

Col. ____

☐ MFB 32. What chores do you require ____________ to do around the home?

☐ MFB 33a. Do they get done? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 33b. If not, why?

☐ MFB 34a. Does _____________ have enough spending money? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 34b. If no, why?

☐ MFB 35a. Does he/she have any problems with transportation? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 35b. If yes, what?

One of our big problems is finding out of home arrangements for older kids. There are a number of possibilities such as foster homes, group homes, living on their own, etc.

☐ MFB 36. What do you think is the best living arrangement for an older boy or girl who has to live away from his own home?

☐ MFB 37a. Do you think _________________ would be able to live alright in a group home? 1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) Uncertain ____.

☐ MFB 37b. Why do you think that?

☐ MFB 38a. Do you think he/she could manage on his/her own? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 38b. Why do you think that?

☐ MFB 39. If he/she were living on his/her own, how do you think he/she

☐ MFB 33a. Do they get done? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 33b. If not, why?

☐ MFB 34a. Does ____________ have enough spending money? 1) Yes ____
2) No ____.

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☐ MFB 38a. Do you think he/she could manage on his/her own? 1) Yes ____
2) No ____.

☐ MFB 38b. Why do you think that?

☐ MFB 39. If he/she were living on his/her own, how do you think he/she would handle these responsibilities:

1____ keeping his/her place clean
2____ getting him/herself up in the morning
3____ taking care of his/her laundry
4____ having trouble with friends coming around
5____ keeping his/her clothes mended
6____ getting his/her meals
7____ multiple
8____ getting enough sleep
9____ making necessary repairs
0____ paying bills
X____ any other (specify) _______
____

Col. ____

☐ MFB 40. Which of these responsibilities do you think would be the biggest problem for ____________?

☐ MFB 41. What kind of experience handling money has ______________ had?

☐ MFB 42. At what age do you see _____________ as being able to manage on his/her own?

☐ MFB 43. What would have to happen to make him/her more self-sufficient or to manage alright on his/her own?

IV. FOSTER PARENTING WITH YOUTHS 16-20

☐ MFB 44. Taking all things together, what do you find to be the major difficulties in working with these kids as a foster parent?

☐ MFB 45. What are the most satisfying things about being a foster parent to this age group?

☐ MFB 46. In thinking about foster kids who've lived in your home, think of the one you've been most successful with? Why?

☐ MFB 47. Think of the one you've been the least successful with. Why was that?

☐ MFB 48. In your experience, what are the things kids this age need extra money for?

☐ MFB 49a. Should foster kids receive an allowance? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____, 3) Uncertain ____, 4) No Opinion ____.

☐ MFB 49b. If yes, at what age?

☐ MFB 42. At what age do you see ____________ as being able to manage on his/her own?

☐ MFB 43. What would have to happen to make him/her more self-sufficient or to manage alright on his/her own?

IV. FOSTER PARENTING WITH YOUTHS 16-20

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☐ MFB 49a. Should foster kids receive an allowance? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____, 3) Uncertain ____, 4) No Opinion ____.

☐ MFB 49b. If yes, at what age?

☐ MFB 49c. If yes, how much?

Col. ____

☐ MFB 50. If there was money available for special needs for older foster youth, what would you see as some of the uses for this money?

☐ MFB 51a. Have you experienced any difficulty in getting medical or dental care for your foster children when you thought it was necessary?
1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 51b. If yes, what kind?

We're also interested in your opinions about things like smoking, drinking and drugs.

☐ MFB 52a. Smoking?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 52b. Drinking?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 52c. Marijuana

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 52d. Speed or barbiturates?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion
5____ not familiar with terms

☐ MFB 52e. LSD?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 53. When older teenagers get into trouble (become delinquent) do you think this is generally a result of:

1____ not knowing better
2____ knowing it's wrong but not caring
3____ chance or very great temptation
4____ just doing what everybody else is doing

V. RELATIONSHIP TO AGENCY

Now we'd like to talk about the Welfare Department

☐ MFB 54. How often does the social worker usually visit the home?

☐ MFB 51a. Have you experienced any difficulty in getting medical or dental care for your foster children when you thought it was necessary? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ MFB 51b. If yes, what kind?

We're also interested in your opinions about things like smoking, drinking and drugs.

☐ MFB 52a. Smoking?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 52b. Drinking?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 52c. Marijuana

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 52d. Speed or barbiturates?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion
5____ not familiar with terms

☐ MFB 52e. LSD?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ MFB 53. When older teenagers get into trouble (become delinquent) do you think this is generally a result of:

1____ not knowing better
2____ knowing it's wrong but not caring
3____ chance or very great temptation
4____ just doing what everybody else is doing

V. RELATIONSHIP TO AGENCY

Now we'd like to talk about the Welfare Department

☐ MFB 54. How often does the social worker usually visit the home?

☐ MFB 55. Who does he usually talk to?

☐ MFB 56. When did the social worker last see Mr. ____________?

Col. ___

FOSTER PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE
- 7 -

☐ MFB 57. Where does the social worker usually see ____________?

1____ school
2____ home
3____ office
4____ other

☐ MFB 58. From your viewpoint, what has the social worker done either to improve or harm ____________'s situation?

☐ MFB 59. In what ways does the social worker help you as foster parents?

☐ MFB 60. In what ways could he have helped you more?

☐ MFB 61. Which social worker have you liked best? ____________ Why?

☐ MFB 62. What do you see as the job of the social worker?

☐ MFB 63. Can you think of anything that can be done to improve the foster home program?

☐ MFB 64a. How do you feel about the current foster home rates?

1____ adequate
2____ not adequate
3____ no opinion

☐ MFB 64b. Why?

☐ MFB 64c. If not adequate, what would you feel would be a satisfactory rate?
$ ________

0____ current rates o.k.
1____ $105 - 125
2____ 126 - 150
3____ 151 - 175
4____ $176 - 200
5____ 201 - 225
6____ 226 - 250
7____ 251 +

☐ MFB 65. Are there any things you could do as foster parents to help the agency find additional foster parents?

☐ MFB 58. From your viewpoint, what has the social worker done either to improve or harm ____________'s situation?

☐ MFB 59. In what ways does the social worker help you as foster parents?

☐ MFB 60. In what ways could he have helped you more?

☐ MFB 61. Which social worker have you liked best? ____________ Why?

☐ MFB 62. What do you see as the job of the social worker?

☐ MFB 63. Can you think of anything that can be done to improve the foster home program?

☐ MFB 64a. How do you feel about the current foster home rates?

1____ adequate 2____ not adequate 3____ no opinion

☐ MFB 64b. Why?

☐ MFB 64c. If not adequate, what would you feel would be a satisfactory rate?
$ ________

0____ current rates o.k.
1____ $105 - 125
2____ 126 - 150
3____ 151 - 175
4____ $176 - 200
5____ 201 - 225
6____ 226 - 250
7____ 251 +

☐ MFB 65. Are there any things you could do as foster parents to help the agency find additional foster parents?

☐ MFB 66. Do you have any plans for taking other foster kids?

☐ MFB 67. Can you take in your home now any additional foster kids?

Col. ___

FOSTER PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE
- 8 -

MFB 68. Do you have any other comments or thoughts based on what we've been talking about?

POST-INTERVIEW INFORMATION--FOSTER PARENTS

The following questions are to be answered by the interviewer immediately after each interview.

☐ 1. Interview conducted with:

1____ foster mother
2____ foster father
3____ both foster mother and foster father

☐ 2. Responsibility for answering most questions assumed by:

1____ foster mother
2____ foster father
3____ shared responsibility

☐ 3. Foster parents' degree of cooperation in the interview:

1____ excellent
2____ good
3____ fair
4____ poor

☐ 4. Foster parents' attitude to the interview:

1____ very positive, interested
2____ answered questions adequately enough
3____ disinterested, not seem to care very much one way or the other
4____ openly showed attitude of being intruded upon
5____ other

☐ 5. Were the answers:

1____ clear and concise
2____ clear but rambling
3____ somewhat unorganized
4____ other (specify) ____________________

☐ 6. Note any unusual problems in the interview ____________________

____

____

☐ 7. Thumbnail sketch of these parents and their home regarding its value as a foster home. ____________________

____

☐ 8. Recommendation for follow-up actions: ____________________

____

☐ 9. What kind of foster children would you see this home being most suited for? ____________________

____

ED053393

AN ANALYSIS OF PERCEPTIONS OF 31 SOCIAL WORKERS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING OUT-OF-HOME CARE FOR YOUTH

Project 410: Study Report #4

San Diego County
Department of Public Welfare

September, 1969

CG 006 378

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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September 22, 1969

TO: AVIS RANA, CHIEF
SPECIAL PROGRAMS, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

FROM: DAVID C. PRITCHARD, PROJECT SUPERVISOR
PROJECT #410

The fourth report of a series of research studies under Project #410 is hereby transmitted. This report is entitled: An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Perceptions of 31 Social Workers Responsible for Administering Out-of-Home Care for Youth. It provides general statistical information describing Department of Public Welfare social workers and their perceptions of older youths they supervise in out-of-home care.

The design for this study was formulated by Project staff in July, 1969, and a pilot study was conducted in July. The data was collected during July and August by staff interviewers Judith Marquette and Elizabeth Mitchum. Department research analyst Ollie James provided consultation and technical assistance. The collected data was analyzed and reported by J. McEwan Macintyre, special consultant for research. Professor Norris E. Class, School of Social Work, The University of Southern California, Project Consultant, participated in the planning and development of the study. Secretarial support was provided by Pearlie Foster.

The cooperation of the district offices in permitting the interviews to be conducted is appreciated.

Appreciation is also expressed to the social work staff who cooperated in a most helpful way with Project staff.

DCP:pbf

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INTRODUCTION

This report represents the fourth phase of a series of studies exploring the needs and circumstances of the population of older youth (16-20) living in out-of-home care under the auspices of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (AFDC) in San Diego County, California. The initial three reports consisted of a description of the social characteristics of the defined population,[1] interviews with the youth themselves[2] and interviews with their foster parents.[3] In this present study, information is provided from the viewpoint of the youth's social worker. This entailed interviewing the social workers responsible for administration of social services under the AFDC program for the youth. Thirty-one Department of Public Welfare social workers have responsibility for the 51 youth interviewed as reported in Study Report #2. Each of the social workers responsible for the case at the time the youth was seen was interviewed.

The findings of these interviews is analyzed and reported in this Report.

No attempt has been made in this report to correlate the answers given by the social workers with those given by the youth or their foster parents; such correlations may be the subject of a later Report.

I. Experience and Background of the Social Workers

Each worker was asked for some information on his experience and background.. The social workers responsible for providing social services under the AFDC program for the youth tend to be young, married, Caucasian, Protestant women who have been with the Department for three or four years.

Seventeen (55 percent) of the social workers are female; 14 (45 percent) male. Although 15 (48 percent) of the workers are in their twenties, the median age is between thirty and thirty-nine. Only nine of the workers (29 percent) are over forty years of age.

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[1] Study Report #1: A Social Survey of Older Youth in Out-of-Home Care: An Analysis of 237 Case Records.

[2] Study Report #2: An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Needs of 51 Youth Living in Foster Homes.

[3] Study Report #3: An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Perceptions of 47 Foster Parents Providing Out-of-Home Care for Youth.

The majority of the workers are married. Twenty (65 percent) are married, five (16 percent) are widowed, separated or divorced; six workers (19 percent) have not been married. Thirteen workers who have been married (52 percent) have children of their own. The children range in age from preschool to adulthood with most of them being in their teens.

The workers state that they have been with the Department, in most cases, for less than five years. Fourteen workers (45 percent) have been with the Department for two years or less, twelve (39 percent) for three or four years, and only five (16 percent) for five years or more. Eighteen workers (58 percent) state that they have been assigned to their present caseload for less than one year; nine workers (29 percent) have had their present assignment for one or two years; only three workers (10 percent) have had their caseloads for more than three years.

Most of the workers have either worked with youth as volunteers or in a previous professional capacity. Character-building (YMCA, Scouts, etc.) and recreation agencies have given these workers experience with youth, as have earlier work experience with the Welfare Department or other community facilities.

The social workers interviewed tend most often to fall within the "Senior Social Worker" category; 17 (55 percent) have this classification. The majority of the workers, 17 (55 percent) have a Bachelor of Arts degree or its equivalent. Fourteen workers (45 percent) have had some graduate school education (most usually in a School of Social Work). Of this latter group, six (19 percent) hold a Master's Degree in Social Work.

II. Workers' Perceptions of the Youth

The workers were asked questions regarding the out-of-home care the youth had received, his reaction to it, his present pattern of behavior regarding getting along in the foster home, school progress, peer relationships and other questions designed to focus on the youth in his present situation. In all instances, the workers' responses derived from his working knowledge of the youth's situation. Case records were not referred to by social workers.

The present social worker has been assigned responsibility for 34 (67 percent) of the youth for one year or less. The current worker has known 13 (25 percent) for between one and two years. Only four of the youth (18 percent) have had the same worker for more than two years.

According to the social worker, one-third of the youth, 17, have been in their present foster home for less than one year. Thirteen youth (25 percent) have been in their present home for between one and three years; nineteen youth (37 percent) have been with their present foster parents for more than three years.

The present social worker placed the youth in the present foster home in only 11 (22 percent) of the cases. The youth, himself, is stated to have played the biggest part in his move to his present home in 18 (35 percent) cases; the social workers state that they believe that representatives of the Welfare Department played the most significant role in 12 (24 percent) of the other placements. According to the social workers' information 24 (47 percent) of the youth visited in their present foster home prior to moving into that home; the workers believe that 8 youth (16 percent) did not visit in the home prior to placement.

The main reason that the workers gave for the youth's moving into the present home is that it was a family known to the youth, and he wished to live there. Seventeen youths (33 percent) were believed to have moved into their present foster home primarily for this reason. In 11 cases (22 percent), however, the youth moved into the home because it was the only alternative available to them. In seven cases (14 percent) the current social worker stated he did not know the rationale for the youth being placed in the present foster home. The other responses focused more on why the youth left his own home rather than why he moved into this particular foster home.

Parental illness or other factors preventing the parents from adequately meeting the needs of the youth are the reasons that the social workers gave for the youth's having to leave his own home; in forty (78 percent) of the cases the workers stated these reasons. In only seven instances (14 percent) was the behavior of the youth cited as the major factor in his having to live away from his own home.

The median length of time the youth have been away from their own parents, according to the social workers' estimates, is between four and five years. The median number of placements that the youth have had in that time is two. Twenty-two of the youth (43 percent) have been in only one placement; however, twelve youth (24 percent) have been in four or more homes.

To secure their impression of how well the youths are actually managing in their present foster homes, the workers were asked questions regarding discipline, the food in the home, required chores and the amount of time spent away from home. They were also asked to rank each youth concerning health, physical appearance, and level of maturity.

Twenty-six youth (51 percent) are reported as doing "very well" in their present foster home by their social worker; another 16 (31 percent) are felt to be doing "about the same as others the same age". Only five of the 51 youth (10 percent) are reported as not managing very well in their present living situation.

Discussion is the most usual method of dealing with disciplinary matters in the foster home. Thirty-three of the youth (65 percent) are reported to discuss matters of concern with their foster parents. In nine instances (18 percent) the foster parents are more likely to impose restrictions on the youth. In some homes, of course, more than one method is used by the foster parents. The social workers believe that the youth's usual reaction to discipline in the home is either agreement, in 15 instances (29 percent), or at least passive acceptance, in 13 cases (25 percent). In nine instances (18 percent), however, the workers did not know the youth's usual reaction to discipline.

Although the food in the foster home had not been an area of specific concern to many of the workers, 28 of the youth (55 percent) were known to feel positively about the food.

Social workers report that the youth seem quite happy with the chores they are expected to do in their foster homes. Only eight of the youth (16 percent) are reported as resenting the fact that some chores are expected of them.

The youth tend to be away from the foster home about two evenings each week according to their workers. In thirteen instances (25 percent) the worker did not know how many evenings the youth spends away from the foster home.

According to the workers, most of the youth, 36 (71 percent) have not participated in any recent violation of the law. In five cases (10 percent) the workers did not know if the youth had been in trouble or not.

The youth are seen as being in good health by their social workers. Twenty-four of the youth (47 percent) received a rating of either "Excellent" or "Very Good" regarding their health by the worker.

Twenty-five youth (49 percent) are seen as having either "Good" or "Average" health; only two youth are rated as having "Poor" health at this time (4 percent). Some workers differentiated between physical and emotional health, feeling that a number of youth are in better physical than emotional health. In 21 cases (41 percent) the workers felt the youths had medical problems that could affect their functioning. These conditions include heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, orthopedic conditions and emotional illnesses.

Asked to rate the physical appearance of the youth, many workers rated them as having "Excellent" or "Very Good" appearance. Twenty-five youth (49 percent) received such ratings. Another twenty-two (43 percent) were seen as having "Good" or "Average" appearance.

The present level of emotional maturity was rated as high in fourteen of the youth (27 percent), average in 23 youth (45 percent) and low in 13 youth (25 percent).

In respect to religion, the youth are not seen by their social workers as being particularly religious; only 13 of the youth (25 percent) are reported as being "religious". The workers were unable to make an assessment, however, in 15 instances (29 percent). Thirteen of the youth (25 percent) are reported to be active churchgoers, another 10 (20 percent) attend Sunday School or youth group attached to a church.

Thirty of the youth (59 percent) are reported by their social workers to be employed full or part-time; 21 (41 percent) do not work. Most of the youth who have employment do unskilled labor or secretarial-clerical type work. In one-half of the cases where the youth is working, the social worker does not know how much the youth is making; seven youth (13 percent) make between $25 and $50 each week they work, another five youth (10 percent) make more than that.

The social workers state that the youth tend to have spending money for their own use. Forty-one youth (80 percent) have spending money; only six (12 percent) do not. The workers did not know if four of the youth (8 percent) had spending money or not. Their own earnings is believed to be the source of spending money for 26 youth (51 percent); 21 youth (41 percent) get an allowance from their foster parents.

Most of the youth are reported as not having difficulty with transportation. Twenty youth, however, (39 percent) are reported as having some trouble in this area. The reason given for this trouble is most often related to the poor bus service in the area or the fact that there is no one in the foster home with the time to drive the youth where he wishes to go.

Asked to identify things the youth does well and enjoys doing, the most frequently identified activities were sports, in 15 instances (29 percent), homemaking tasks (sewing, cooking, housework) in 12 instances (24 percent) and dating activities in 11 cases (22 percent). Many workers identified more than one activity in which they felt the youth had ability. When asked to identify positive aspects of the youth's personality, most workers spoke of their strong character, degree of ambition and self-reliance. These were mentioned by workers in connection with 25 of the youth (49 percent). Other attributes included the youths' friendly, outgoing personality and thoughtful, sincere manner; these were identified in 22 cases (43 percent). Asked regarding negative aspects of the youths' behavior, moodiness and argumentativeness were most often mentioned; these were identified in connection with 8 of the youth (16 percent). A negative characteristic identified with many of the youth was their apparent immaturity. This was manifest in ways such as being easily led, selfish, and easily dissatisfied. These characteristics were identified with regard to 22 of the youth (43 percent).

In response to being asked to give a rating of each youth's feelings about himself or herself, 24 (47 percent) were seen as being quite sure of themselves by their social worker. Twenty-seven of the youth, (53 percent) however, were seen as not being very sure of themselves.

The following table indicates the workers' responses to being asked to rate how well each youth seems to get along with his peers, foster parents, teachers and employers:

(n=51)	Very well	Average	Poorly	Not known
Peers	18 (35%)	22 (43%)	10 (20%	1 (2%)
Foster parents	31 (61%)	15 (29%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)
Teachers	16 (31%)	19 (37%)	4 (8%)	12 (23%)
Employers	12 (23%)	6 (12%)	2 (4%)	31 (61%)

It is of interest to note the fact that workers tend to perceive the youths as getting along better with adults than their peers. The high incidence of "Not known" responses regarding employers is partly the result of the fact that 40 percent of the youth are not employed either on a full or part-time basis.

III. The Social Worker-Youth Relationship

The social workers state that the largest number of youth, 27 (53 percent) are seen at least once each month. A further 13 (25 percent) are usually interviewed every two months. Five of the youth (10 percent) are seen on the average of every three months; six youth (12 percent) did not fit into categories as they are seen either more or less frequently according to their needs.

Most of the social workers interview the youth in their foster homes. Thirty-six (71 percent) are usually seen in their foster home; the remaining youth are seen at school, after school, or in different places according to the schedules of the worker and the youth; they do not have a consistent locale for interviews. Twenty-nine of the youth (57 percent) are reported to be seen alone frequently; eight youth (16 percent) are seen privately sometimes, and nine youth (18 percent) are never seen alone.

The largest percentage of youth are reported as having a "very good" relationship with their social worker. Twenty-one youth (41 percent) are reported as being in this category by their workers. Thirteen youth (25 percent) are felt to have an "average" relationship with the worker, and twelve youth (24 percent) are reported as having a poor relationship with their social worker. Where the relationship is positive, most workers feel it rests on a mutual feeling of warmth, liking and trusting; where the relationship is poor, the workers comment on the youth as being resistant and untrusting. In seven cases (14 percent), the workers felt that they had insufficient contact with the youth to be in a position to make a valid assessment of the relationship.

The social workers state that most often they discuss future planning with the youth regarding educational and vocational plans. Current problems with which the youth are coping are discussed slightly less frequently; their emotional and social adjustment to the particular situation is often discussed with the youth by their social worker. Discussion of problems in the foster home was ranked quite low in the use of time spent with the youth.

When asked to identify something that they had done to improve the youth's situation, the most frequent response by the worker was "counseling" or "emotional support"; this was mentioned in connection with 22 of the youth (43 percent). Ten youth (20 percent) are reported to have been helped to obtain employment or more suitable educational preparation for employment by their social worker. Eight youth (16 percent) are not felt to have received anything of significance from their present social worker. Within this latter group are those youth who do not wish to be identified with the Department and those who have recently been assigned to a new social worker.

The social workers were asked what more, if anything, they would like to have done with the youth. The most frequent answer was "more intensive counseling", "more emotional support"; this was mentioned regarding 16 youth (31 percent). The workers would like to have done more with the youth regarding their future plans either educationally or vocationally in 8 cases (16 percent). Six youth (12 percent) were felt not to have been in need of additional service from the worker.

The demands of the agency, primarily the size of the caseload, was the main reason given by the social workers for not having accomplished all that they felt was necessary in working with the youth; this was mentioned with regard to 17 of the youth (33 percent). However, the youth's attitude or particular situation was mentioned by many workers as preventing their doing all they felt essential for the youth; this was raised regarding 16 of the youth (31 percent).

IV. The Social Worker-Foster Parent Relationship

Social workers report that they have visited in the foster homes of 38 (75 percent) of the youth during the month immediately preceding their interview with the study staff. The remainder of the foster parents were seen more than one month prior to the interview. The foster mother was the most likely family member to be present at the last interview; this was the case in 42 of the homes (82 percent). The youth was also present in 31 cases (61 percent), and other children in the foster home in 24 cases (47 percent). Workers state that they talk with the foster parents alone quite frequently in 23 of the cases (45 percent), sometimes in 16 cases (31 percent), and rarely or never in 11 cases (22 percent). The foster father is sometimes seen in 18 cases (35 percent), and almost never seen by the social worker in the remainder of cases.

The most frequent topic of discussion between the foster parent and social worker is in respect to the foster parent-youth relationship; this was given as the focus of 23 recent contacts (45 percent). Matters pertaining to the youths; education or future vocational choice were discussed in 12 recent sessions in the foster home (24 percent).

Social workers report that the majority of the foster parents seem satisfied with the youth in their home; 42 youth are reported to be making satisfactory progress according to their foster parents

(82 percent). Five youth are reported as not getting along satisfactorily with their foster parents (10 percent), and in four cases the worker was unable to make an assessment of the youth in the home. The two factors that appear to be given the most weight by the foster parents in discussing the youth's progress in their home are his becoming a part of the family and his behavior which reflects in a positive way on his foster parents.

In 38 cases (75 percent) the worker feels that the present foster parents are adequate substitute parents for the particular youth placed with them. The workers did not feel sure enough of their own grasp of the situation in some cases to make such an assessment, but in only five cases (10 percent) did the workers not feel the present foster parents were adequate parent substitutes for the particular youth. In many cases the workers cited the wish of the foster parents to be good parents to the youth and made active attempts to treat the youth as they would their own.

V. The Social Worker's Relationship with Youth's Own Family and Significant Others

Asked if the youths' mothers were living, the social workers believed the mothers to be alive in thirty (59 percent) cases, to be deceased in 14 (27 percent) cases, and did not know in 7 (14 percent) cases. Fathers of the youths are believed to be alive in 26 (52 percent) cases, dead in 12 (24 percent) cases, and the workers did not know in another 12 (24 percent) cases. The present whereabouts of eight mothers of the youth (16 percent) and nine fathers (18 percent) is unknown to the workers. The social worker responsible for the youth's out-of-home care is not likely to have much contact with the youth's parents. In 14 cases (27 percent) the worker has seen the youth's mother "occasionally" or "frequently", but in only six cases (12 percent) has the father been seen as often as that. In sixteen instances (31 percent) the youth's worker has never seen his or her mother; in 25 instances (49 percent) the youth's father has not been interviewed by the present worker.

In those cases where the youth's worker has also seen the natural parents, it has most often concerned the other children in the family home or to enlist their support regarding the youth's progress in the foster home. In only four instances (8 percent), the worker indicated the main goal was to reunite the youth with his own family. Asked to assess their impact on the youth's own family, the workers did tend to believe that they had been able to assist the families in making some improvement in their situation.

In most instances, 19 of 51 (61 percent), the workers felt it to be advantageous for the youth to maintain contact with his own family members; the remaining workers tended to believe that the value of continuing such contact has to be determined on an individual basis. They did not wish to give blanket approval to the concept. No worker felt that contact should never be maintained.

Community personnel seen most often by the social workers regarding the youth are school teachers and school counselors. In 24 cases (47 percent) the workers state that they have visited the youth's school to talk about his academic progress and future vocational possibilities. In 11 cases (22 percent) the social workers have consulted with physicians and other medical personnel regarding the youths' medical condition. In seven cases (14 percent), employers have been interviewed.

VI. Educational and Vocational Concerns

When asked to compare the youth with others in his classes, most of the social workers felt he did as well or better than the average. Twelve of the youth (24 percent) are seen as doing below average in their school work.

At the time the interviews were conducted, school had just finished for the year; 27 of the youth (53 percent) had completed high school. Of the remaining 24 youth, only three (12 percent) were not expected to complete Grade 12. Asked if they believed that the youth should continue his education after high school, the social workers stated their hope that 28 youth (55 percent) would be able to continue their education; seven youth (14 percent) are already enrolled in some type of post-high school course. Of the remaining, it was felt that only five youth (10 percent) should not continue their education, and the workers were uncertain about another ten students (20 percent). The most usual answer to why education should be continued reflected the workers' assessments of the youths in regard to their ability, potential or ambition.

The workers state that they have discussed educational possibilities and encouraged further education with 36 of the youth (71 percent). Workers have been active, also, in contacting individuals and agencies to get information for the youth regarding educational and vocational opportunities and have, in some cases, referred the youth to specialized educational facilities or pointed them in the direction of employment possibilities. In only four instances (8 percent) has the worker not been involved with the youth regarding his future educational or vocational plans.

The youth are interested in a wide variety of employment choices according to their social workers. Fourteen of the youth (27 percent) are reported to be interested in the professions either as aides or fully-qualified practitioners. Seven (14 percent) are interested in secretarial or other office work. Four (8 percent) youth are interested in training for a trade, as are four girls interested in becoming beauticians or cosmetologists. The workers generally agreed with the choices made by the youth and in most cases had discussed such possibilities with him. Workers tend to feel that the youths have a good chance of succeeding with their vocational plans; in only six instances (12 percent) did the worker feel the particular youth had a low chance of being successful in following his objective.

VII. Future Living Arrangements

In a majority of cases, the social worker believes that foster homes are the best out-of-home care for the particular youth. In 30 instances (59 percent), foster homes were the workers' first choice. They felt that 7 of the youth (14 percent) could manage in apartments on their own and that five youth (10 percent) might do best in a group home. When asked directly regarding living in a group home for all the youth, the workers felt that 24 youth (47 percent) could manage in a group home, 16 (31 percent) could not, and they were uncertain if 11 (22 percent) of the youth could or could not cope with group living. Group living was seen as offering companionship for the youth, but some were seen as needing more individual attention than they might receive in a group home.

More youth were seen as being unable to manage without a family structure, 23 (45 percent), than could manage without this type of support, 21 (41 percent); the workers were uncertain about the ability of 7 of the youths to manage with or without this support. The most frequently given rationale to support the workers' view is the dependent, immature nature of many of the youth; this was balanced, however, with almost as many youth being seen as presently able to manage without family support.

Asked their opinion of aspects of living alone that might cause the youth some trouble, the social workers most often identified the following: paying bills and budgeting, keeping clothes mended, getting up in the morning, and having trouble with friends coming around. Regarding specific problems with money-management, the workers felt the youths did not have sufficient experience with budgeting and might tend to buy impulsively leaving less than adequate funds for their needs toward month's end.

Nineteen is the median age at which the workers saw the youths being able to manage on their own.

VIII. Critique of the Out-of-Home Care Program and Work with Youth

Twenty-four of the 31 social workers interviewed (77 percent) stated that they did not feel the current rates paid to foster parents were adequate; only 7 workers (23 percent) felt the present rates to be sufficient. The main reason given to support this belief was that older children and youth have more expenses than younger children. Many felt that the rates should increase with the increased cost-of-living. The median amount the workers felt the rate should be increased is between twenty-five and fifty dollars monthly; this would bring the rate to between $126 and $150.

Asked their opinion of the policy of making the youth his own payee, many social workers felt this would be a positive move; 27 (87 percent) saw value in such a policy change. The main supporting argument for such a change presented by the workers was that it might increase the youth's striving for independence and realistically assist him in shouldering adult responsibilities. Were such a change to be implemented, however, the workers suggested criteria that they felt would need to be met before the youth was made his own payee. Some of the criteria that were mentioned include the fact that such a decision should be based on a total assessment of the youth in his situation and that it should be consistent with other decisions made regarding the youth. The workers felt that a minimum age should be determined for payments being made directly to the youth. The youth's previous experience managing money and the need for the Department to give approval of the youth's plan for living arrangements were also mentioned. The most frequently mentioned determinant was the maturity of the youth in respect to his readiness to manage his own affairs.

Giving the youth an allowance some time before making him his own payee was seen by many social workers to be a method by which he could begin to learn to manage his own financial affairs before assuming complete responsibility for them. Another method was for the social workers to encourage the foster parents to give the youth more responsibility in the home.

Twenty-three of the social workers (74 percent) feel that youth receiving out-of-home care administered by the Department should receive an allowance from the Department. The median age at which such an allowance should begin was seen as 15 years or less. Although some workers felt they could suggest an amount for such an allowance, some felt that the amount should be graduated to the needs of the particular youth. Those who did specify an amount said between ten and thirty dollars monthly. The reasons given by those workers who did not agree that the Department should give allowances to the youth included their concern that this might encourage dependency on the Department by the youth, or their belief that such allowances should come more appropriately from the foster parents.

Asked what they felt the youth needed most from them, the social workers identified their own role as helping the youth to clarify their feelings regarding themselves and others, being a "safe" person with whom the youth can "blow off steam", and giving support and encouragement to the youth as he works toward his own goals. Other concerns that the workers felt they could assist with included educational and vocational planning, presenting themselves as examples for the youth to identify with, and helping the youth to adjust to his foster home situation.

The most frustrating aspect of working with this age group was identified as present on those occasions when the youth's own behavior or attitude served to prevent the worker from "getting through" to the youth. A lack of time to spend with the youth sufficient for the development of a truly trusting relationship was mentioned by some workers; two elements of this are the size of the caseloads and the changing of workers. The lack of resources in the community was mentioned by some workers as impairing their ability to be of assistance to the youth.

The most helpful approach that the workers have found in their working with youth includes: working at the youth's own speed toward his own goals, showing tolerance and a non-judgemental attitude, and being truly honest with the youth in their own reactions to what is discussed.

Asked their opinion on the possible implementation of a training program for foster parents, 28 social workers (90 percent) agreed that this would be helpful. Workers saw such a program as allowing discussion between foster parents about their common concerns, of increasing their understanding through education of the impact on children and youth of family breakdown, and giving the foster parents increased understanding of normal growth and development through childhood into adolescence and adulthood.

IX. Summary

Social workers responsible for administering the AFDC program for fifty-one youth between the ages of 16 and 21 were interviewed in August, 1969. The results of these interviews have been analyzed and reported.

Although the median age of the workers was relatively young, many of them had previous experience, either in other professional employment or with their own families, in working with adolescents.

Many workers have known the youth for a comparatively short period of time. The impact of the resulting lack of knowledge of the youth is indicated by the number of occasions when workers could not make assessments of the youth in answer to specific questions. However, in some instances, the youths, themselves, have not been receiving out-of-home care for very long.

The lack of possible alternative placements to discuss with the youth at the time when these are needed is pointed to by the fact that on many occasions the workers stated that their prime reason for moving the youth into the present home often was the fact that it was the only one available at the time.

The youth do appear to be doing rather well in their foster homes. They appear to the social workers to be generally happy in the homes; discipline does not appear to be a problem in most of the homes and delinquent behavior is not generally found. The youth, however, do not appear to be very sure of themselves. Perhaps a further study might indicate if this is specific to adolescence or more pronounced in those living away from their own families.

Social workers state that vocational and educational plans are discussed with the youth; this is in keeping with the fact that attendance at a training program or educational facility is mandatory if the AFDC grant is to continue.

The workers perceive a role for themselves with these youth in helping in giving emotional support to them in their endeavors. Although many of the youth are known to have emotional problems, the need for psychiatric treatment, per se, was not frequently mentioned.

The social workers tended to feel that when they were unable to establish the type of relationship necessary to adequately assist the youth, two factors predominated. One was the youth's resistance, and the other factor was working conditions, such as the size of the caseload, which prevented the workers from giving the youth the time necessary.

Operationally, out-of-home care does not appear to be continually oriented to the youth's own family. Regardless of the reasons, there is only limited contact with the youth's own parents and relatives while he is receiving out-of-home care.

The youth tend to be not only separated from their families but from such other community resources as the church. Only a limited number of youths are connected with church groups or attend church services.

The large majority of youth appear to the social workers to be doing satisfactorily in school. The present educational prognosis made by the workers is favorable to the point that they feel able to support more than half of the youth in their wish for post-high school education.

The foster home is seen by most social workers as being the best alternative living arrangement for those youth unable to remain at home. Although group homes are receiving increased attention in the child welfare literature, the workers did not see any sizeable number of these youth benefitting from such an alternative.

Many workers see value in the older youth becoming his own payee. Such a policy change would still leave unsolved the corollary problem of the perceived need to increase payments for foster home care.

Certain items that were identified in the interviews with the social workers have special relevance for future planning by the Department.

1. The foster home program for youth appears to have a high level of practicality at this time. Until more information is available regarding alternatives, the foster home program will continue to be perceived as the preferred way to meet the need of out-of-home care for some time to come. This fact has implications for planning, recruiting and certification tasks within the Department. It also points to the probable usefulness of establishing and maintaining a roster of sound, reliable foster homes to cover replacements as they arise. Although it appears that foster homes for older youth are operating satisfactorily, there was agreement among workers that implementation of a foster parent training program would be of increased helpfulness in respect to enhancing foster parents' knowledge and skills.

2. The social workers do not describe frequent contact with natural parents of youth. Theoretically such contact would seem desirable,

but further exploration might suggest that the workers are fundamentally responding to the youths' movement toward independence. Further study of this area of social work practice might be very helpful.

SOCIAL WORKER SCHEDULE

PROJECT 410 - NEEDS OF OLDER CHILDREN LIVING AWAY FROM HOME

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Youth Name ______________________ Social Survey No. ____________

Social Worker Name ______________________ Classification ____________

District ______________________ Telephone No. ____________

Interviewed by ______________________

Date __________ Time Began ________ End ________ Approx. Length ______

Place of Interview ______________________

Private ______________________ Others Present ______________________

Note any special circumstances ______________________

____

APPENDIX

SOCIAL WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE

II. YOUTH'S CARE AND FUNCTIONING

☐ 1. How long have you been ____________'s social worker?

1____ less than 1 year
2____ 1 to 2 years
3____ 2 to 3 years
4____ 4 years or more

☐ 2. How long has he/she been in the present foster home?

1____ less than 1 year
2____ 1 to 2 years
3____ 2 to 3 years
4____ 3 to 4 years
5____ 4 to 5 years
6____ 5 to 10 years
8____ more than 10 years
0____ don't know, can't remember, etc.

☐ 3. Did you place him/her in this home? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 4. Did __________ visit the home prior to placement?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 5. Who had the biggest part to play in making the choice of the present foster home?

0____ don't know
1____ youth
2____ foster parents
3____ social worker
4____ own parents
5____ other agency (CPO, etc.)
6____ other (specify) ______________
____

☐ 6. What was the main reason for ___________ being placed in this foster home?

☐ 7. Why did the youth have to leave his own home?

0____ don't know
1____ inability of relatives to care for him/her
2____ parental illness
3____ parental behavior--deprivation of child's needs
4____ parental behavior--economic needs
4____ parental behavior--economic needs
5____ child's own behavior
6____ illegitimacy
7____ multiple
8____ other (specify) ______________
____

☐ 8. How long has he/she been away from his own parents?

1____ less than 1 years
2____ 1 to 2 years
3____ 2 to 3 years
4____ 3 to 4 years
5____ 4 to 5 years
6____ 5 to 10 years
8____ 10 years or more
0____ don't know

☐ 9. How many placements has he/she been in? 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more
0) don't know

☐ 10. How well do you feel the youth is managing in this foster home?

2____ 1 to 2 years

4____ 4 years or more

☐ 2. How long has he/she been in the present foster home?

1____ less than 1 year
2____ 1 to 2 years
3____ 2 to 3 years
4____ 3 to 4 years
5____ 4 to 5 years
6____ 5 to 10 years
8____ more than 10 years
0____ don't know, can't remember, etc.

☐ 3. Did you place him/her in this home? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 4. Did __________ visit the home prior to placement?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 5. Who had the biggest part to play in making the choice of the present foster home?

0____ don't know
1____ youth
2____ foster parents
3____ social worker
4____ own parents
5____ other agency (CPO, etc.)
6____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 6. What was the main reason for __________ being placed in this foster home?

☐ 7. Why did the youth have to leave his own home?

0____ don't know
1____ inability of relatives to care for him/her
2____ parental illness
3____ parental behavior--deprivation of child's needs
4____ parental behavior--economic needs
4____ parental behavior--economic needs
5____ child's own behavior
6____ illegitimacy
7____ multiple
8____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 8. How long has he/she been away from his own parents?

1____ less than 1 years
2____ 1 to 2 years
3____ 2 to 3 years
4____ 3 to 4 years
5____ 4 to 5 years
6____ 5 to 10 years
8____ 10 years or more
0____ don't know

☐ 9. How many placements has he/she been in? 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more
0) don't know

☐ 10. How well do you feel the youth is managing in this foster home?

0____ hard to say
1____ very well
2____ about as well as others the age
3____ not very well

☐ 11. How does he/she feel about the food?

0____ hard to say
1____ likes it a lot
2____ about the same as others the same age
3____ complains about the food

Col. ____

SOCIAL WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE

☐ 12. What is the youth's usual attitude toward doing chores that are expected of him/her around the home?

0____ don't know
1____ resents it
2____ seems fine, about the same as others
3____ happy to do them
4____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 13. How does the foster mother/father usually discipline the youth?

0____ don't know
1____ discusses situation
2____ restriction
3____ shouts, loses temper, etc.
4____ other (specify) ____________
____
7____ multiple

☐ 14. What is the youth's usual reaction to this?

0____ don't know
1____ agrees with them
2____ passive acceptance
3____ rejection
4____ resentment
5____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 15. How does the youth feel about his/her supply of clothing?

0____ don't know
1____ seems adequate for their needs
2____ wishes he/she had more
3____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 16. What kinds of things has the youth had trouble with the law over?

0____ don't know
1____ nothing
2____ the curfew
3____ automobile infractions
4____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 17. About how many evenings a week does the youth spend at home? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0 (don't know)

☐ 18. Which of the following describes his/her usual health right now?

1____ excellent
2____ very good
3____ good
4____ average
5____ poor
6____ very poor
7____ don't really know

☐ 19. How would you rate his/her physical appearance compared to others the same age?

1____ excellent
2____ very good
3____ good
4____ average
5____ poor
6____ very poor
7____ don't really know

☐ 20. How happy would you say ____________ is in the current foster home?

0____ N/A (moved)
1____ very happy
4____ very unhappy
5____ uncertain

1____ resents it
2____ seems fine, about the same as others
4____ other (specify) ______________
____

☐ 13. How does the foster mother/father usually discipline the youth?

0____ don't know
1____ discusses situation
2____ restriction
3____ shouts, loses temper, etc.
4____ other (specify) ______________
____
7____ multiple

☐ 14. What is the youth's usual reaction to this?

0____ don't know
1____ agrees with them
2____ passive acceptance
3____ rejection
4____ resentment
5____ other (specify) ______________
____

☐ 15. How does the youth feel about his/her supply of clothing?

0____ don't know
1____ seems adequate for their needs
2____ wishes he/she had more
3____ other (specify) ______________
____

☐ 16. What kinds of things has the youth had trouble with the law over?

0____ don't know
1____ nothing
2____ the curfew
3____ automobile infractions
4____ other (specify) ______________
____

☐ 17. About how many evenings a week does the youth spend at home? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0 (don't know)

☐ 18. Which of the following describes his/her usual health right now?

1____ excellent
2____ very good
3____ good
4____ average
5____ poor
6____ very poor
7____ don't really know

☐ 19. How would you rate his/her physical appearance compared to others the same age?

1____ excellent
2____ very good
3____ good
4____ average
5____ poor
6____ very poor
7____ don't really know

☐ 20. How happy would you say ______________ is in the current foster home?

0____ N/A (moved)
1____ very happy
2____ fairly happy
3____ fairly unhappy
4____ very unhappy
5____ uncertain
9____ don't know

☐ 21. What are some of the things that ___________ does well and enjoys doing?

☐ 22. What are _______________'s strong points?

Col. ____

SOCIAL WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE
- 3 -

☐ 23. What are some of the negative aspects of his personality?

☐ 24. Compared to other young people about the same age, how would you rate his/her feelings about him/herself?

0____ No opinion
1____ very sure of self
2____ quite sure of self
3____ not very sure of self
4____ not at all sure of self

☐ 25a. Does ____________ have spending money?

1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ don't know
4____ no opinion

☐ 25b. What is the source?

1____ earnings
2____ allowance
3____ other
4____ don't know

☐ 25c. If no, why not?

☐ 26a. Does he/she have any problems with transportation?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 26b. Why?

☐ 27a. Is ____________ religious?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 27b. If yes, what religion?

1____ Catholic
2____ Protestant
3____ Seventh Day Adventist
4____ Mormon
5____ Unitarian
6____ Other ____________________
0____ No religion

☐ 27c. If yes, what church activities does ____________ attend?

0____ N/A
1____ church
2____ Sunday School
3____ youth groups
4____ other church activities
5____ don't know

☐ 28a. Is ______________ employed full or part-time?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 28b. What type work?

1 general unskilled labor
6 ____

☐ 24. Compared to other young people about the same age, how would you rate his/her feelings about him/herself?

0____ No opinion
1____ very sure of self
2____ quite sure of self
3____ not very sure of self
4____ not at all sure of self

☐ 25a. Does ____________ have spending money?

1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ don't know
4____ no opinion

☐ 25b. What is the source?

1____ earnings
2____ allowance
3____ other
4____ don't know

☐ 25c. If no, why not?

☐ 26a. Does he/she have any problems with transportation?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 26b. Why?

☐ 27a. Is _____________ religious?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 27b. If yes, what religion?

1____ Catholic
2____ Protestant
3____ Seventh Day Adventist
4____ Mormon
5____ Unitarian
6____ Other ____________________
0____ No religion

☐ 27c. If yes, what church activities does ____________ attend?

0____ N/A
1____ church
2____ Sunday School
3____ youth groups
4____ other church activities
5____ don't know

☐ 28a. Is _______________ employed full or part-time?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 28b. What type work?

1____ general unskilled labor
2____ child care
3____ secretarial-clerical
4____
5____
6____
8____
9____ other (specify) ____________
____
0____ unemployed

☐ 28c. Weekly salary?

1____ $ 0-24
2____ 25-49
3____ 50-74
4____ 75-99
5____ $100-149
6____ 150 +
0____ unemployed

Col. ____

☐ 29. In terms of ____________'s social functioning, how would you say he gets along with the following people:

a____ his peers
b____ his foster parents
c____ his teachers
d____ his employers

Code:
1) very well
2) average
3) poorly
4) don't know

☐ 30. Speaking about his/her emotional capacity, how would you rate ______________ in the following areas:

a____ stage of maturation
b____ vulnerability to use of drugs
c____ need to act out
d____
e____

Code:
1) high
2) average
3) low
4) don't know

☐ 31a. Do you know when ___________ visited the doctor last?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't remember ____

☐ 31b. What was the reason for the visit?

☐ 32. Does he/she have any medical problems that affect his/her functioning?

☐ 33a. Is ____________'s mother living?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 33b. Is his/her father living?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

34. What family contacts has _____________ had during the last year?

	Fa	Mo	Both	Siblings	/Other Relatives
☐ 34a. phone					
☐ 34b. letter					
☐ 34c. visits					

III. WORKER RELATIONSHIP:

A. WITH YOUTH

☐ 35. How often do you see _______________?

1____ every 2 weeks
2____ once a month
3____ every 2 months
4____ every 3 months
5____ infrequently
6____ other ____________________

a____ his peers 1) very well
b____ his foster parents 2) average
c____ his teachers 3) poorly
d____ his employers 4) don't know

☐ 30. Speaking about his/her emotional capacity, how would you rate ______________ in the following areas:

a____ stage of maturation
b____ vulnerability to use of drugs
c____ need to act out
d____
e____

Code:
1) high
2) average
3) low
4) don't know

☐ 31a. Do you know when ___________ visited the doctor last?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't remember ____

☐ 31b. What was the reason for the visit?

☐ 32. Does he/she have any medical problems that affect his/her functioning?

☐ 33a. Is ____________'s mother living?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 33b. Is his/her father living?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

34. What family contacts has _____________ had during the last year?

	Fa	Mo	Both	Siblings	Other ____ Relatives
☐ 34a. phone					
☐ 34b. letter					
☐ 34c. visits					

III. WORKER RELATIONSHIP:

A. WITH YOUTH

☐ 35. How often do you see _______________?

1____ every 2 weeks
2____ once a month
3____ every 2 months
4____ every 3 months
5____ infrequently
6____ other ______________________

☐ 36. Where do you usually see him/her?

1____ different places
2____ foster home
3____ school
4____ other ______________________

☐ 37. How frequently do you see him/her alone?

1____ very often
2____ frequently
3____ sometimes
4____ not very often
5____ never

Col. ____

☐ 38a. How would you describe your relationship with ____________?

1) very good ____ 2) average ____ 3) poor ____

☐ 38b. Why?

☐ 38c. Do you have any difficulty in relating or communicating with him/her?
1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 38d. If yes, in what way?

☐ 39. Is ____________ cooperative?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) sometimes ____

☐ 40. What role do you think you play in ____________'s life? (Get an idea whether important, insignificant, etc.)

☐ 41a. What general subject areas do you usually cover with ___________?

1____ problems with foster parents
2____ problems with natural family
3____ current employment
4____ future education
5____ future vocation
6____ current problems (transportation, money, clothing, etc.)
7____ multiple
8____ boy-girl relationships
9____ emotional and social adjustment
0____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 41b. Which of these areas takes most of your time? ________________

☐ 42a. What have you done to (improve or) help ___________'s situation?

☐ 42b. What would you have liked to have done?

☐ 42c. Why haven't you been able to accomplish these things?

B. WITH FOSTER PARENTS

☐ 43a. When was the last time you were at foster home?

0____ can't remember
5____ 1 month ago

☐ 38b. Why?

☐ 38c. Do you have any difficulty in relating or communicating with him/her?
1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 38d. If yes, in what way?

☐ 39. Is ____________ cooperative?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) sometimes ____

☐ 40. What role do you think you play in ____________'s life? (Get an idea whether important, insignificant, etc.)

☐ 41a. What general subject areas do you usually cover with ____________?

1____ problems with foster parents
2____ problems with natural family
3____ current employment
4____ future education
5____ future vocation
6____ current problems (transportation, money, clothing, etc.)
7____ multiple
8____ boy-girl relationships
9____ emotional and social adjustment
0____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 41b. Which of these areas takes most of your time? ____________

☐ 42a. What have you done to (improve or) help ____________'s situation?

☐ 42b. What would you have liked to have done?

☐ 42c. Why haven't you been able to accomplish these things?

B. WITH FOSTER PARENTS

☐ 43a. When was the last time you were at foster home?

0____ can't remember
1____ a few days ago
2____ 1 week ago
3____ 2 weeks ago
4____ 3 weeks ago
5____ 1 month ago
6____ 1-3 months ago
8____ 4-6 months ago
9____ over 6 months ago

☐ 43b. Who was present?

1____ youth
2____ foster father
3____ foster mother
4____ natural children
5____ youth's siblings
6____ youth's relatives
7____ multiple
8____ other ____________
____

Col. ____

SOCIAL WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE

☐ 43c. What did you talk about?

☐ 44a. How often do you talk with the foster parent(s) alone?

1____ very often
2____ frequently
3____ sometimes
4____ not very often
5____ never

☐ 44b. What subjects do you usually focus on with foster parents?

☐ 45. How often do you talk with foster father?

1____ often
2____ sometimes
3____ almost never
4____ never

☐ 46a. Are foster parents satisfied with this youth?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 46b. Why do you think that?

☐ 47a. Are you as the social worker comfortable with these foster parents as adequate substitute parents to this youth?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) Yes and No ____

☐ 47b. Why?

☐ 48. What do you see as the most important thing these foster parents have to offer this youth?

☐ 49a. Does this coincide with what the youth seems to be actually getting from the foster parents? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) not sure ____.

☐ 49b. If not, what is youth getting from foster family?

☐ 50a. Is there anything that you would have liked to have done with these foster parents that you haven't?

☐ 50b. Why didn't you?

☐ 44a. How often do you talk with the foster parent(s) alone.

1____ very often
2____ frequently
3____ sometimes
4____ not very often
5____ never

☐ 44b. What subjects do you usually focus on with foster parents?

☐ 45. How often do you talk with foster father?

1____ often
2____ sometimes
3____ almost never
4____ never

☐ 46a. Are foster parents satisfied with this youth?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) don't know ____

☐ 46b. Why do you think that?

☐ 47a. Are you as the social worker comfortable with these foster parents as adequate substitute parents to this youth?

1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) Yes and No ____

☐ 47b. Why?

☐ 48. What do you see as the most important thing these foster parents have to offer this youth?

☐ 49a. Does this coincide with what the youth seems to be actually getting from the foster parents? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) not sure ____.

☐ 49b. If not, what is youth getting from foster family?

☐ 50a. Is there anything that you would have liked to have done with these foster parents that you haven't?

☐ 50b. Why didn't you?

C. WITH YOUTH'S FAMILY

☐ 51. How often do you see:

51a. ____ natural mother
51b. ____ natural father
51c. ____ older sibling
51d. ____ younger sibling
51e. ____ other relative (specify)
____

Code:
0) deceased
1) never
2) occasionally
3) frequently
4) whereabouts unknown

Col. ____

SOCIAL WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE

☐ 52a. What is the casework goal in having contact with the youth's family?

☐ 52b. What kind of impact has your contacts with ___________ had?

D. WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

☐ 53a. Have you had any contact with youth's:

0____ none
1____ teachers
2____ school counselors
3____ clergy
4____ employer
5____ medical personnel, etc.
6____ recreational personnel
7____ multiple
8____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 53b. What was general nature or purpose of these contacts?

IV. EDUCATIONAL/VOCATIONAL ASPECTS

☐ 54. How well does he/she do in school or college compared with others in his/her class?

0____ don't know
1____ above average
2____ average
3____ below average

☐ 55a. Have you talked with anyone at school about how ___________ was doing?
1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 55b. If yes, who did you talk to at school?

☐ 56. Does he/she plan to finish high school?

0____ don't know
1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ uncertain
4____ dropped out
5____ has completed high school

☐ 57a. Do you believe _____________ should continue his/her education after high school?

0____ don't know
1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ uncertain
4____ dropped out
5____ already in higher education

☐ 57b. Why?

☐ 58. How have you been involved in his/her future educational planning?

0____ N/A
5____ referred him/her to a school

☐ 52b. What kind of impact has your contacts with ____________ had?

D. WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

☐ 53a. Have you had any contact with youth's:

0____ none
1____ teachers
2____ school counselors
3____ clergy
4____ employer
5____ medical personnel, etc.
6____ recreational personnel
7____ multiple
8____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 53b. What was general nature or purpose of these contacts?

IV. EDUCATIONAL/VOCATIONAL ASPECTS

☐ 54. How well does he/she do in school or college compared with others in his/her class?

0____ don't know
1____ above average
2____ average
3____ below average

☐ 55a. Have you talked with anyone at school about how ____________ was doing?
1) Yes ____ 2) No ____.

☐ 55b. If yes, who did you talk to at school?

☐ 56. Does he/she plan to finish high school?

0____ don't know
1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ uncertain
4____ dropped out
5____ has completed high school

☐ 57a. Do you believe ____________ should continue his/her education after high school?

0____ don't know
1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ uncertain
4____ dropped out
5____ already in higher education

☐ 57b. Why?

☐ 58. How have you been involved in his/her future educational planning?

0____ N/A
1____ discussed possibilities
2____ encouraged further education
3____ talked with school personnel
4____ contacted other people or agencies to get information
5____ referred him/her to a school
6____ other (specify) ____________
____
7____ multiple
8____ no involvement

☐ 59a. What does ____________ say he/she would like to do in the way of employment?

Col. ____

☐ 59b. Is this a good choice for him/her?

0____ N/A
1____ Yes
2____ No
3____ No opinion

☐ 59c. Why?

☐ 60. How have you been involved in his/her future vocational plans?

0____ N/A
1____ discussed possibilities
2____ encouraged youth's plans
3____ referred youth to other people or agency
4____ other (specify) ____________
____
7____ multiple
8____ no involvement

☐ 61. How would you rate ____________'s motivation, potential and intellectual capacity to pursue his educational/vocational plans?

1____ don't know
2____ no plans
3____ high chance of success
4____ average chance of success
5____ low chance of success

V. FUTURE LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

☐ 62. What do you think is the best living arrangement for older boys or girls who have to live away from their own home?

☐ 63a. Do you think ____________ would be able to live alright in a group home? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) uncertain ____

☐ 63b. Why do you think that?

☐ 64a. Do you think he/she could function adequately in a living arrangement without a family structure? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) Uncertain ____

☐ 64b. Why do you think that?

☐ 64c. If yes, what services would he/she need help with?

☐ 65. In your opinion, which of the following do you think would cause the most difficulty if ____________ was living on his/her own?

1____ keeping his/her place clean
2____ getting him/herself up in the morning
3____ taking care of his/her
5____ keeping his/her clothes mended
6____ getting his/her meals
7____ multiple
8____ getting enough sleep

☐ 59c. Why?

☐ 60. How have you been involved in his/her future vocational plans?

0____ N/A
1____ discussed possibilities
2____ encouraged youth's plans
3____ referred youth to other people or agency
4____ other (specify) ____________
____
7____ multiple
8____ no involvement

☐ 61. How would you rate ____________'s motivation, potential and intellectual capacity to pursue his educational/vocational plans?

1____ don't know
2____ no plans
3____ high chance of success
4____ average chance of success
5____ low chance of success

V. FUTURE LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

☐ 62. What do you think is the best living arrangement for older boys or girls who have to live away from their own home?

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☐ 64b. Why do you think that?

☐ 64c. If yes, what services would he/she need help with?

☐ 65. In your opinion, which of the following do you think would cause the most difficulty if ____________ was living on his/her own?

1____ keeping his/her place clean
2____ getting him/herself up in the morning
3____ taking care of his/her laundry
4____ having trouble with friends coming around
5____ keeping his/her clothes mended
6____ getting his/her meals
7____ multiple
8____ getting enough sleep
9____ making necessary repairs
0____ paying bills
X____ any other (specify) ________
____

☐ 66. Specifically in terms of money management, what kinds of problems, if any, would you foresee?

Col. ____

☐ 67. At what age do you see _____________ being able to manage on his/her own? 16 17 18 19 20 21 years.

VI. TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORKER

☐ 68. Sex of worker: 1) Male ____ 2) Female ____

☐ 69. Age of worker ________

0____ no answer given
1____ 20-29
2____ 30-39
3____ 40-49
4____ 50-59
5____ 60 +
6____

☐ 70. Marital status

0____ no answer given
1____ single
2____ married
3____ widowed
4____ separated
5____ divorced

☐ 71. Religion

0____ none given
1____ Protestant
2____ Roman Catholic
3____ Unitarian
4____ Mormon
5____ Seventh Day Adventist
6____ Other
7____ Atheist

☐ 72. Ethnic Group

1____ Caucasian
2____ Mexican-American
3____ Negro
4____ Other

☐ 73. Number of children

0____ none
1____ one
2____ two
3____ three
4____ four
5____ five or more

☐ 74a. Ages of children--oldest

0____ none
1____ preschool
2____ 6-11
3____ 12-18
4____ 19-25
5____ over 26

☐ 74b. Ages of children--youngest

0____ none
1____ preschool
2____ 6-11
3____ 12-18
4____ 19-25
5____ over 26

☐ 75. Education

1____ Bachelor of Arts equivalent
2____ Some graduate school
3____ Master of Social Work degree
4____ Other

☐ 76. Length of time with the County Welfare Department:

VI. TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORKER

☐ 68. Sex of worker: 1) Male ____ 2) Female ____

☐ 69. Age of worker ________

0____ no answer given
1____ 20-29
2____ 30-39
3____ 40-49
4____ 50-59
5____ 60 +
6____

☐ 70. Marital status

0____ no answer given
1____ single
2____ married
3____ widowed
4____ separated
5____ divorced

☐ 71. Religion

0____ none given
1____ Protestant
2____ Roman Catholic
3____ Unitarian
4____ Mormon
5____ Seventh Day Adventist
6____ Other
7____ Atheist

☐ 72. Ethnic Group

1____ Caucasian
2____ Mexican-American
3____ Negro
4____ Other

☐ 73. Number of children

0____ none
1____ one
2____ two
3____ three
4____ four
5____ five or more

☐ 74a. Ages of children--oldest

0____ none
1____ preschool
2____ 6-11
3____ 12-18
4____ 19-25
5____ over 26

☐ 74b. Ages of children--youngest

0____ none
1____ preschool
2____ 6-11
3____ 12-18
4____ 19-25
5____ over 26

☐ 75. Education

1____ Bachelor of Arts equivalent
2____ Some graduate school
3____ Master of Social Work degree
4____ Other

☐ 76. Length of time with the County Welfare Department:

1____ less than one year
2____ one and two years
3____ three and four years
4____ five years to ten years
5____ 11-19 years
6____ 20 + years

☐ 77. Present classification:

1____ Sr. Social Worker, MSW
2____ Social Worker, MSW
3____ Sr. Social Worker
4____ Social Worker
5____ Other (specify) ____________
____

Col. ____

☐ 78. Length of time with present caseload:

1____ less than one year
2____ 1 and 2 years
3____ 3 and 4 years
4____ 5 to 10 years
5____ 11-19 years
6____ 20 + years

☐ 79. Other paid work experience dealing with youth:

☐ 80. Other volunteer experience working with youth:

VII. WORKER'S PERCEPTIONS

☐ 81. In your experience, what do older youths in foster care need the most from social workers?

☐ 82. What frustrates you the most in working with older teenagers in foster care?

☐ 83. What can you identify as the most helpful approach or technique in working with older teenagers?

☐ 84. What do you think about the idea of the youth's natural parents keeping in touch with him?

☐ 85. In your experience, what are the things kids this age need extra money for?

☐ 86a. Should foster kids receive an allowance directly from DPW?

1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) uncertain ____, 4) no opinion ____,
5) it depends ____ (clarify) ________________________________

☐ 86b. If yes, at what age?

☐ 86c. If yes, how much?

☐ 86d. If no, why not?

3____ 3 and 4 years   6____ 20 + years

☐ 79. Other paid work experience dealing with youth:

☐ 80. Other volunteer experience working with youth:

VII. WORKER'S PERCEPTIONS

☐ 81. In your experience, what do older youths in foster care need the most from social workers?

☐ 82. What frustrates you the most in working with older teenagers in foster care?

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☐ 86a. Should foster kids receive an allowance directly from DPW?

1) Yes ____, 2) No ____, 3) uncertain ____, 4) no opinion ____,
5) it depends ____ (clarify) ______________________________

☐ 86b. If yes, at what age?

☐ 86c. If yes, how much?

☐ 86d. If no, why not?

☐ 87a. Do you think the current foster home rates are adequate?

1) Yes ____   2) No ____   3) No opinion ____

☐ 87b. If not, why?

Col. ____

☐ 87c. If not, what do you feel would be a satisfactory rate? ________

0____ current rates o.k.
1____ $ 105-125
2____ 126-150
3____ 151-175
4____ $176-200
5____ 201-225
6____ 226-250
8____ 251 +

☐ 88a. If a foster youth were to live on his own, what do you think of the idea of the youth being paid his/her AFDC check directly rather than being paid to a substitute payee?

1) good idea ____ 2) not a good idea ____ 3) no opinion ____

☐ 88b. Why do you think that?

☐ 89. In respect to older youths in foster care who would like to live on their own, can you think of appropriate criteria which would need to be met before the youth could receive his AFDC check directly?

☐ 90. Money management seems to be one of the bigger problems these kids have, what do you see as a way of improving these skills?

91. We're also interested in your opinions about the following:

☐ 91a. Smoking?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ 91b. Drinking?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ 91c. Marijuana?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ 91d. Speed or barbiturates?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion
5____ not familiar with terms

☐ 91e. LSD?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

2____ 126-150
3____ 151-175
6____ 226-250
8____ 251 +

☐ 88a. If a foster youth were to live on his own, what do you think of the idea of the youth being paid his/her AFDC check directly rather than being paid to a substitute payee?

1) good idea ____ 2) not a good idea ____ 3) no opinion ____

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1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

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1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ 91c. Marijuana?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ 91d. Speed or barbiturates?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion
5____ not familiar with terms

☐ 91e. LSD?

1____ harmful
2____ not harmful
3____ uncertain
4____ no opinion

☐ 92. When older teenagers become delinquent do you think it is generally a result of:

0____ no opinion
1____ not knowing better
2____ knowing it's wrong but not caring
3____ chance or very great temptation
4____ just doing what everyone else is doing
5____ other (specify) ____________
____

Col. ____

SOCIAL WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE

☐ 93. Do you have any ideas to enhance our foster home recruiting efforts for older teenagers?

☐ 94a. Do you think an appropriate training program for foster parents would be helpful? 1) Yes ____ 2) No ____ 3) No opinion ____

☐ 94b. If yes, in what way?

☐ 94c. If no, why not?

☐ 95. What book, article, theory, etc., has had the most influence on your social work practice?

☐ 96. What professional journals do you read?

☐ 97. Do you have any other comments or thoughts in respect to any of the areas we've touched on or on ones we haven't discussed?

POST-INTERVIEW INFORMATION---SOCIAL WORKER

The following questions are to be answered by the interviewer immediately after each interview.

☐ 1. Worker's degree of cooperation:

1____ excellent
2____ good
3____ fair
4____ poor

☐ 2. Worker's attitude to the interview:

1____ very positive, interested
2____ answered questions adequately enough
3____ disinterested, not seem to care much one way or the other
4____ openly showed attitude or feeling of being intruded upon
5____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 3. Were the answers:

1____ clear and concise
2____ clear but rambling
3____ somewhat unorganized
4____ other (specify) ____________
____

☐ 4. Interviewer's impression of the social worker's contact with youth:

1____ seems to be mainly responding to crises in the foster home
2____ shows some concern for the youth as a person
3____ shows much concern for the youth as a person
5____ seems to deal with present situation only
6____ concerned with planning future with youth
8____ main contact seems to be with regard to staying or leaving homes

☐ 5. What age group would you see this worker doing best with?

1____ preschool children
2____ elementary school children
3____ teenagers
4____ young adults
5____ adults
6____ older adults

☐ 6. How would you assess the worker's grasp of this youth in his situation?

1____ minimal
2____ fair
3____ good
4____ unusually full

☐ 7. Assessment of the worker's professional demeanor:

1____ quietly competent
2____ verbalizes well, appears competent
3____ quiet, unsure of self and professional role
4____ somewhat brash, as if to cover feelings of unsureness
5____ other (specify) ____________
____

8. Note any unusual problem in this interview ____________________
____
____

ED053393

SPECIAL REPORT ON OLDER YOUTH IN GROUP CARE

PROJECT #410: STUDY REPORT #5

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OCTOBER, 1969

CG 006 378

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I. Introduction

This report on three youths living in group-type facilities constitutes a supplemental statement to the four reports on youth in out-of-home care.* The focus on the four previous reports was on the 51 AFDC youth living in foster homes under the direct supervision of the Department of Public Welfare. At the time of data collection for the reports on these 51 youths, the Department of Public Welfare also had responsibility for eight youth in institutions or group homes. Four of these youth were severely retarded; thus they were not subjected to field interviewing. The other four were in some form of group-type care in the following situations: one youth was at a Catholic residence hall for women; one resides in a group home for girls maintained under private auspices; and two youth were at a 24-hour treatment facility for teenagers with behavior problems.

These four were selected for special interviews, but at the time of the data collection, one of the youths at the 24-hour treatment facility had left and could not be interviewed. Thus this report deals with the findings on three AFDC youth in group-type settings as of April, 1969. A total of fifteen interviews were conducted by one interviewer, Betsy Mitchum, during August and September, 1969. These interviews included the three youths, eight adults acting as substitute parents,** and four social workers. (One youth had two social workers.) One substitute parent was not available to be interviewed. As far as possible the youth, foster parent, and social worker questionnaires from the previous studies were used in this inquiry. Due to the difference in the type of care, some of the questions were not appropriate and thus not used while others were utilized with slight modifications.

The small number of youth in group home care precludes the feasibility of an exhaustive examination of this study population. Nevertheless, information describing these youth can be useful in terms of developing a beginning understanding about youth supervised by the Welfare Department who need group-type residential care. The format for this report will first be to present the responses of the youth themselves in order to establish some of their basic characteristics. Subsequently these youth will be compared with the larger study population of youth in foster homes by examining on a selective basis congruent and incongruent factors as reported by substitute parents and social workers.

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* Study Report #1: A Social Survey of Older Youth in Out-of-Home Care: An Analysis of 237 Case Records.

Study Report #2: An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Needs of 51 Youth Living in Foster Homes.

Study Report #3: An Analysis of Social Characteristics and Perceptions of 47 Foster Parents Providing Out-of-Home Care for Youth.

Study Report #4: An Analysis of Perceptions of 31 Social Workers Responsible for Administering Out-of-Home Care for Youth.

** The substitute parent refers to the housemother or other caretaker with responsibility for daily supervision of the youths while in the group home.

II. Findings from Youth Interviews

A. Characteristics of Youth

All three of the youth interviewed were Caucasian females, ages 17 or 18. One of the girls had an illegitimate child. Two of these girls described their health condition as excellent. In rating the youth's physical appearance, both the youth and interviewer rated them as average to good with the interviewer tending to rate higher than the youth themselves. All the girls described themselves as being "fairly happy" in their present circumstances.

B. Social Philosophy

When questioned about social issues, these three girls agreed that smoking, speed, barbiturates, and LSD were harmful; however, they disagreed that drinking was harmful with two stating they were uncertain and one believing that it was harmful. The question regarding the causes of delinquency also produced disagreement in that two felt that delinquency was generally a result of "knowing it's wrong but not caring" while the third felt it was "just doing what everybody else is doing."

Attitudes about religion and the police were also conflicting, but these youth tended to regard religion with little or no interest and the performance of the police as very uneven with some doing good while others are bad. Two of the girls had never had any problems with the police.

C. Finances

Although all three of the girls had been or were employed during the summer, two felt that they did not have sufficient spending money. These same girls wanted more money to buy clothing. All agreed that youth in foster care should receive an allowance from the Welfare Department and that the allowance should begin at age 15 or 16.

D. Out-of-Home Care

When asked about their experiences with out-of-home care, all three stated that they had been 16 or older when they first left their own home, and this was their first placement. None had lived in a foster home; none had ever been in placement for longer than one and one-half years. Two girls had been in their present placement less than nine months. In each case the youth had regular contact (at least every two months) with her family, but in two of three cases, contact was with the father rather than the mother.

When these youth were asked what they thought would be the ideal out-of-home living arrangements for older youth, two agreed that a situation similar to theirs would be best while the third felt that foster homes were ideal. If they were to live on their own, each agreed she would like to share an apartment, but only one youth felt ready to live on her own. After marriage, the preferred living place was an apartment or rented house in the city or suburbs.

When they were asked some details about their individual out-of-home care, all agreed that they had participated in choosing their particular living arrangement, and two of the girls felt that they themselves were mainly responsible for the choice. There was no agreement about how satisfied they were in their present circumstances. They described themselves as feeling "so-so" to feeling "well satisfied". None were dissatisfied.

Since each youth had more than one parent substitute, questions about what they liked or disliked about foster parents produced a variety of answers. Each girl could and, in fact, did differentiate by identifying qualities or characteristics that she liked or disliked in each substitute parent. All were able to discuss a number of subjects with the parent substitutes, and gave the impression that communication was good. In these group situations all had a large number of other girls to interact with; frequently their comments about what they liked or disliked about substitute parents was related to how these substitute parents interacted not only with each of them but also with their peers.

The method of discipline generally employed, as the girls saw it, was to talk over things, and the youth tended to passively accept this approach. All had household responsibilities and were willing to do them.

E. Relationship to Social Worker

All of these youth stated that they have had at least three social workers. One youth has two social workers assigned to her at the present time-one from the institution and one from the Welfare Department. She did not consider the social worker at the Welfare Department as her worker, however, because she had no direct contact with her. All stated that they saw their social worker at least once a week, and all felt the social worker had helped primarily by providing counseling and by helping them develop self-awareness.

F. Education and Vocational Plans

All of these youth attended high school during the 1968-69 school year. Their past school history indicated that on the average each girl had attended less than two elementary schools but that they averaged more than five schools attended since grade 7.

As mentioned previously, all were employed during the past summer. Vocational plans for each girl were indefinite, and all three felt they could benefit from vocational testing. Only one youth was planning to go on for further education immediately after high school, but none had concrete future educational plans. Although all three youths stated that in terms of planning for the future they seek advice from a number of sources including substitute parents, natural parents, relatives, etc., they tended to feel that the social worker was the most helpful advisor in this area.

Marriage and children appeared to be a future goal for all these girls, but two of them expected to delay marriage for up to 10 years. This preference may or may not be influenced by the fact that only one of the three is dating at the present time.

III. Findings from Substitute Parent Interviews

Both the parent substitutes and the foster parents tend to see these youth as happy individuals who get along fairly well with their peers. The parent substitutes in the group care settings seemed to rate their youths' health and their feelings about themselves somewhat lower than the foster parents did for youth in foster homes. Although they did not use the same terms, both sets of parents identified positive personality traits pertaining to the youths' social skills such as thoughtfulness, cooperativeness, cheerfulness, etc. The most frequent negative aspect of personality mentioned was moodiness.

Both groups agreed that these youth were not yet ready to be on their own. However, they differed on what would be the biggest problem if these youth were to live on their own. Foster parents emphasized such things as money management, taking care of laundry and getting enough sleep while the parent substitutes emphasized the youths' inability to handle boy-girl relationships.

Generally speaking, both sets of parents saw these youth as doing average work in school and felt that the youth should continue their education after high school.

Questions about the youth's relationship to the agency produced a significant difference in that the youth in group-type care are seen more frequently than the youth in foster homes (about once a week as compared to once a month). The role of the social worker as perceived by parent substitutes seems to be a more active one for youth in group-type care and when asked how the social worker had helped the youth and the foster parents, a variety of answers were given. No parent substitute indicated that there were no social services provided while this answer did occur in 32% of the cases regarding foster home-type care. Both groups agreed, however, that social workers provide support regarding discipline and suggestions as to how to handle certain situations. Even though the parent substitutes appear to receive more help from the social worker, they tend to want even more help than they receive. While 79% of the foster parents felt there was no way that the social worker could have helped more, only 50% of the parent substitutes said this.

There seemed to be considerable agreement regarding attitudes toward social problems with both sets of parents saying that Speed, barbiturates, LSD and smoking were most harmful and drinking being least harmful. Foster parents tended to see marijuana as being more harmful than the parent substitutes. Both groups tended to agree that teenagers got into trouble because they wanted to do what everybody else was doing.

When asked what the ideal out-of-home living arrangements for older youth would be, there was more disagreement among the parent substitutes as to whether group homes or foster homes would be better while the overwhelming response of foster parents was foster homes.

Although both groups seemed to agree that these adolescents had sufficient spending money to meet their needs, their responses tended to be similar on the question of the Welfare Department giving the youth an allowance with about half of both groups replying affirmatively. Both tended to identify clothing, personal needs and recreation as appropriate expenditures for this money.

IV. Findings from Social Worker Interviews

In addition to the three social workers at the Welfare Department, the social worker employed by the one institution was interviewed.

At the institution's request the Department of Public Welfare social worker did not have ongoing contact with the youth and obtained all her information about the youth from the social worker employed at the institution. The social worker at the Welfare Department did maintain contact with the youth's family and served as a liaison between the institution and the family.

The youth in group-type care seemed similar to their peers in foster homes in that both were seen by their social workers as doing rather well in their current living situations. Both groups appear to be fairly happy, but do not appear to be very sure of themselves. In evaluating the youths' physical appearance and health, both groups of social workers tended to see the youth as above average. The general consensus regarding both groups' social functioning seemed to be that it was slightly better than average. The youth in foster homes were rated as getting along better with adults than peers, while the youth in group-type care seemed to get along fairly well with both adults and peers.

All the youth, regardless of the type of placement, were thought to have enough spending money.

On the subject of educational/vocational plans the interviews produced similar findings in that both groups of social workers tended to feel that these youth should continue their education after high school, and in most instances, the social workers have been actively involved in helping the youth make educational and vocational plans.

The reason for choosing the particular living situation was different in that the youth were placed in a particular foster home because it was the only one available while the youth were placed in group-type care because they did not want to live in a foster home. The youth in group-type care tended to play a more active role in choosing their current living situation than the youth in foster homes.

Neither group of teenagers was seen as being able to function independently, and both groups of social workers tended to identify the same problem areas if the youth were to live on his own-namely-paying bills, getting up in the morning and getting enough sleep. All agreed that budgeting would be the biggest area that the youth would need help with if they were to live alone.

In discussing their relationship with the youth in group-type care these social workers tended to see the youth more frequently and to interview them in different places (as opposed to youth in foster homes who were most often seen in their homes). Both groups tended to describe their relationship as being very good. The subjects discussed with the two groups of youth tended to be different with the social workers in group-type care discussing problems with the natural family and emotional and social adjustment, while the social workers working with youth in foster homes tended to discuss future planning regarding educational and vocational plans. In addition, the duration of the casework relationship was described as longer for the youth in group-type care.

Contacts with the youths' natural family seemed more intensive for youth in group-type homes, and the social workers tended to emphasize the goal of reuniting the family more frequently than the social workers working with youth in foster homes.

V. Summary

As mentioned previously, no definite conclusions can be stated from this study since there were only three youths, all girls, included in the group home/institution population. There are several aspects worth noting, however, which have pertinency for staff development and planning activities.

Social workers tended to meet more frequently with youth in group care and also tended to have more contact with the youth's natural family. The focus of counseling also was different. Counseling with group care youth was centered more on immediate problem-solving while counseling with foster home youth tended to be oriented more toward future planning.

A significant area of study interest has been the youth's ability to live on his own. In respect to possible problem areas if living independently, it is interesting to note that only the substitute parents of group home youth saw boy/girl relationships as a significant problem. Social workers of both groups and foster parents tended to mention money management and tasks of daily living as the areas of greatest possible difficulty.

Finally, in terms of the most desirable out-of-home placement, it was reported that the group home youth stated that they did not wish to live in a foster home setting. Youth in foster homes preferred either foster homes or independent apartments and did not consider group-type homes as appropriate. Reviewing responses from social workers, foster parents and substitute parents in respect to the best type of out-of-home care, the tendency was to choose foster homes although the feeling was not unanimous. Substitute parents are divided between group homes and foster homes as the ideal out-of-home living arrangement.